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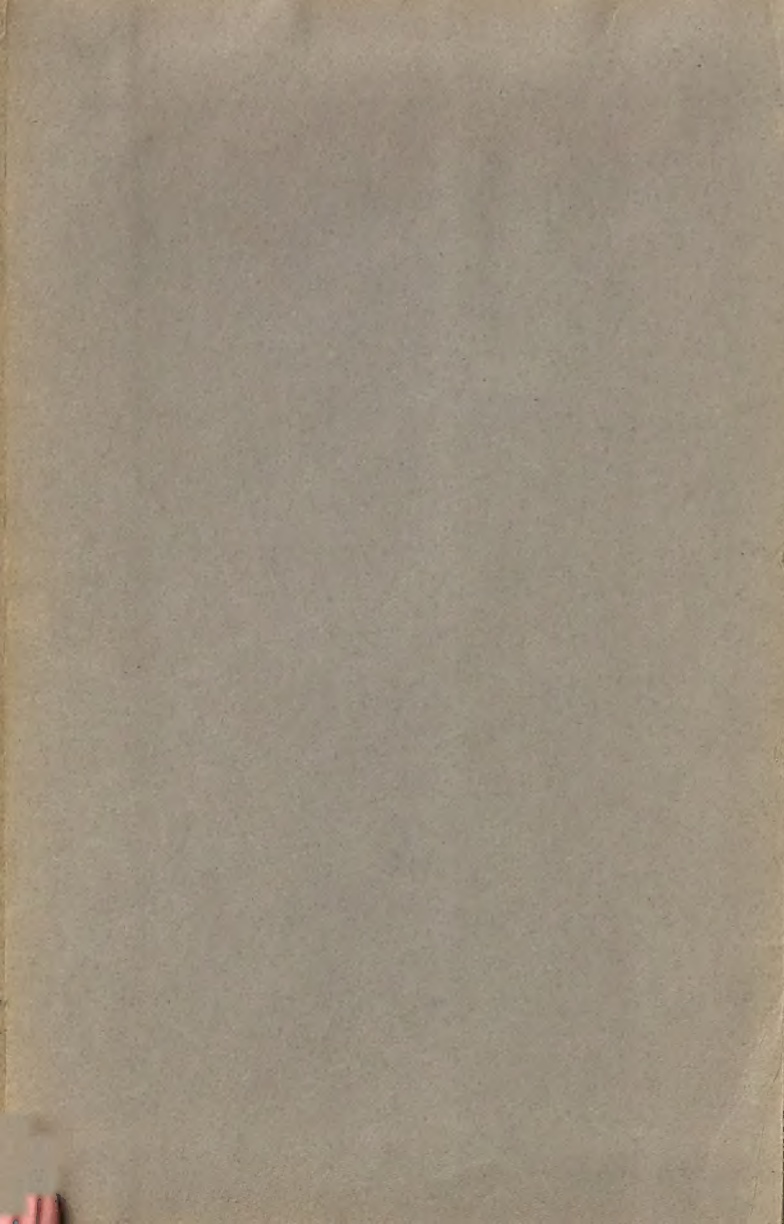
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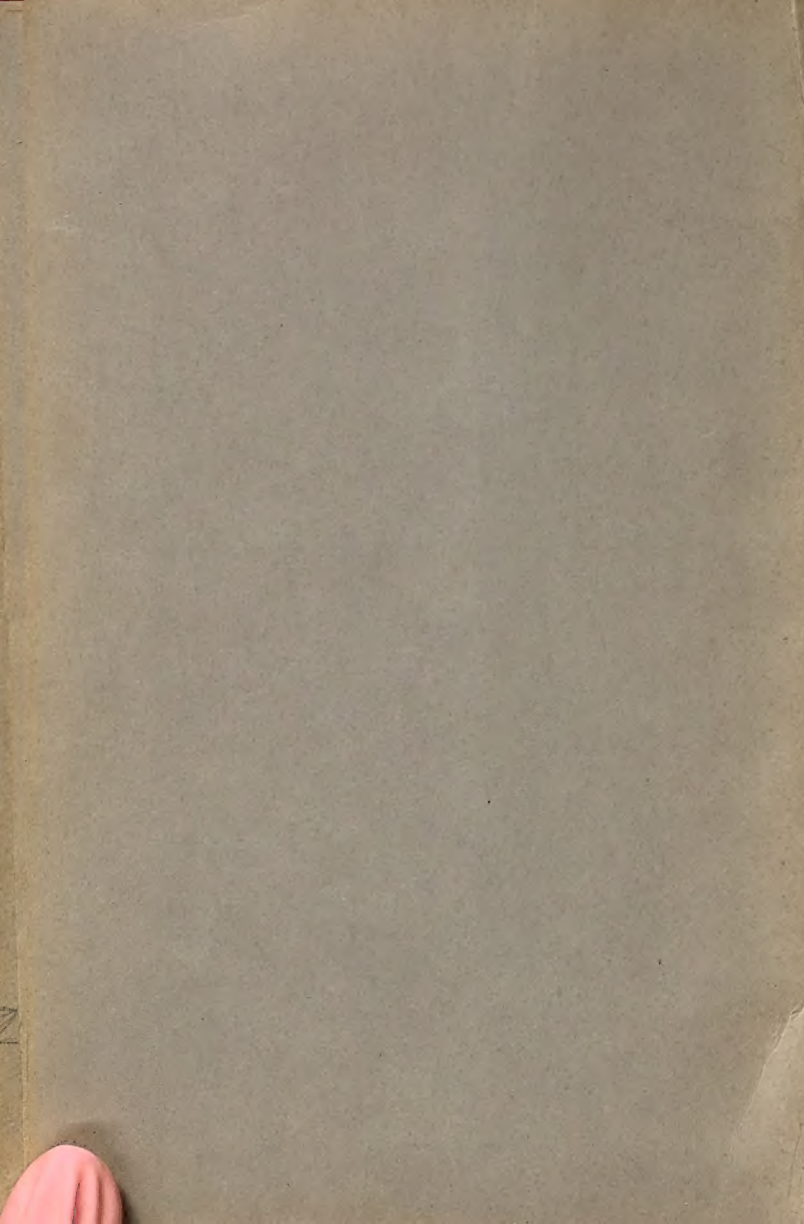
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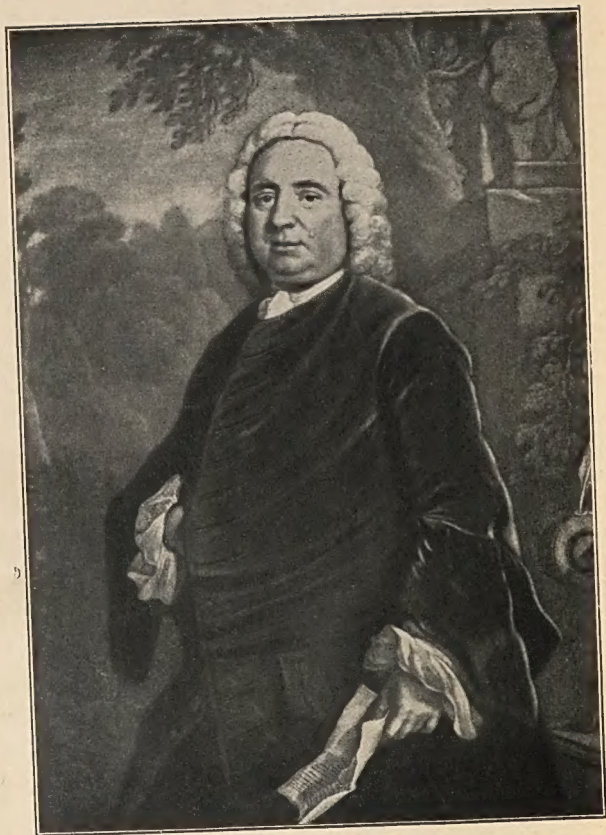
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SAMUEL RICHARDSON

CLARISSA

OR

THE HISTORY OF A YOUNG LADY

BY

SAMUEL RICHARDSON

CONDENSED BY

CHARLES H. JONES



NEW YORK

HENRY HOLT AND COMPANY

January, 1926



PRINTED IN THE U. S. A.

PREFACE.

FEW novels have ever been so widely and highly praised as "The History of Clarissa Harlowe." At the time of its first appearance, more than a century ago, it was read and wept over, and talked about by every one in England who could read at all; much more literally than even of Dickens' novels, it can be said that it reached the entire reading class. Nor was this merely a popular success. Sherlock commended it (and "Pamela") from the pulpit; Pope praised it in terms unusual with him; Doctor Johnson declared it to be the first book in the world for the knowledge it displays of the human heart; Sir James Mackintosh thought it the finest work of fiction ever written in any language; Sir Walter Scott said that "no work had appeared before, perhaps none has appeared *since*, containing such direct appeals to the passions in a manner so irresistible;" and Lord Macaulay is reported to have known it almost by heart. In France, too, the fame of Richardson reached an eminence scarcely ever attained there by a foreign author. Diderot and Rousseau compared him with Homer; and it is said that for many years Frenchmen visiting England were wont to seek the Flask Walk at Hampstead—the scene of one of the episodes in "Clarissa"—in the belief that the novel recorded historic fact. More than this, the two principal characters of the story have passed into literature and conversation as types; and thousands use Lovelace and Clarissa as standards of comparison without any idea of how they got their attributes.

Why is it then, that, outside a small circle of scholars and critics, we so seldom meet with any one nowadays, who has read

"Clarissa"? The chief reason is not far to seek. A glance at the work reveals it at once; for twenty-four hundred closely printed pages would frighten the vast majority of modern readers away from a story even more fascinating than this. Fortunately Richardson, more easily perhaps than any other great writer, bears abridgment. His plots are singularly simple; the essential incidents and episodes are not numerous; and his style is a marvel of amplitude and redundancy. Of course, this very redundancy of style has a certain charm for readers with exhaustless leisure and patience; but on the other hand it has rendered the task of adapting his work to readers of another kind more satisfactory in the performance than is usual in such cases.

In the following abridgment the Editor has confined himself to eliminating superfluous and irrelevant matter. Only in three or four instances has he added so much as a note; and the language, the punctuation, even the divisions into sentences and paragraphs, are the same as in the original work. In the elisions also, the Editor's object has been to preserve all the characteristic features of "Clarissa" as Richardson wrote it. The "indelicacy" (as it is termed) of that work, was not obvious in the last century even to a church dignitary; and it is evident, from the correspondence and memoirs of the period, that this fault, if Richardson can be taxed with it, did not strike any of his contemporaries. The truth is, he presents scenes rather nakedly which would be avoided or but slightly touched by an equally reputable novelist of our day. But his purpose is always good; he always aims at exalting virtue and condemning vice. He may be occasionally coarse, but he is never immoral; and apart from its interest as a story and study of human nature, "Clarissa" is of the utmost value as an absolutely truthful picture of English society in the latter part of the last century.

C. H. J.

THE HISTORY OF CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Miss Anna Howe to Miss Clarissa Harlowe.

Jan. 10.

I AM extremely concerned, my dearest friend, for the disturbances that have happened in your family. I know how it must hurt you to become the subject of the public talk: and yet upon an occasion so generally known, it is impossible but that whatever relates to a young lady whose distinguished merits have made her the public care, should engage every body's attention. I long to have the particulars from yourself; and of the usage I am told you receive upon an accident you could not help; and in which, as far as I can learn, the sufferer was the aggressor.

Mr. Diggs, the surgeon, whom I sent for at the first hearing of the rencounter, to inquire, for *your* sake, how your brother was, told me, that there was no danger from the wound, if there were none from the fever; which it seems had been increased by the perturbation of his spirits.

Mr. Wyerley drank tea with us yesterday; and though he is far from being partial to Mr. Lovelace, as it may be well supposed, yet both he and Mr. Symmes blame your family for the treatment they gave him when he went in person to inquire after your brother's health, and to express his concern for what had happened.

They say that Mr. Lovelace could not avoid drawing his sword, and that either your brother's unskillfulness or passion left him from the very first pass entirely in his power.

As all your friends without doors are apprehensive that some other unhappy event may result from so violent a contention, in which it seems the families on both sides are now engaged, I must desire you to enable me, on the authority of your own information, to do you occasional justice.

My mother, and all of us, like the rest of the world, talk of nobody but you on this occasion, and of the consequences which may follow from the resentments of a man of Mr. Lovelace's spirit ; who, as he gives out, has been treated with high indignity by your uncles. My mother will have it, that you cannot now, with any decency, either see him, or correspond with him. She is a good deal prepossessed by your uncle Antony ; who occasionally calls upon us, as you know ; and on this rencounter, has represented to her the crime which it would be in a sister to encourage a man who is to wade into her favor (this was his expression) through the blood of her brother.

Write to me therefore, my dear, the whole of your story from the time that Mr. Lovelace was first introduced into your family ; and particularly an account of all that passed between him and your sister ; about which there are different reports ; some people scrupling not to insinuate that the younger sister has stolen a lover from the elder : and pray write in so full a manner as may satisfy those who know not so much of your affairs as I do. If anything unhappy should fall out from the violence of such spirits as you have to deal with, your account of all things *previous* to it will be your best justification.

Your ever grateful and affectionate,

ANNA HOWE.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.

Harlowe Place, Jan. 13.

Our family has indeed been strangely discomposed.—*Discomposed!*—It has been in *tumults*, ever since the unhappy transaction ; and I have borne all the blame ; yet should have had too much concern from myself, had I been more justly spared by every one else.

For, whether it be owing to a faulty impatience, having been too indulgently treated to be *inured* to blame, or to the regret I have to hear those censured on my account whom it is my duty to vindicate ; I have sometimes wished, that it had pleased God to have taken me in my last fever, when I had every body's love and good opinion ; but oftener that I had never been distinguished by my grandfather as I was : since that distinction has estranged from me my brother's and sister's affections ; at least, has raised a jealousy with regard to the apprehended favor of my two uncles, that now and then overshadows their love.

My brother being happily recovered of his fever, and his wound in a hopeful way, although he has not yet ventured abroad, I will be as particular as you desire in the little history

you demand of me. But heaven forbid that any thing should happen which may require it to be produced for the mention!

I will begin, as you command, with Mr. Lovelace's story of my sister; and be as brief as possible. I will recite it, and leave you to judge of the truth of the report raised; for your younger sister has robbed the elder.

It was in pursuance of a conference between Lord M. and his uncle Antony, that Mr. Lovelace [my father and mother notwithstanding] paid his respects to my sister Arabella. My brother was then in Scotland, busying himself in viewing the condition of the considerable estate which was left him there by his generous godmother, together with one as considerable in Yorkshire. I was also absent at my *Dairy-house*, as it is called,* busied in the accounts relating to the estate which my grandfather had the goodness to devise to me; and which once a year are left to my inspection, although I have given the whole into my father's power.

My sister made me a visit there the day after Mr. Lovelace had been introduced, and seemed highly pleased with the gentleman. His birth, his fortune in possession, a clear £2,000 a year, as Lord M. had assured my uncle; presumptive heir to that nobleman's large estate; his great expectations from Lady Sarah Sadlier, and Lady Betty Lawrence, who, with his uncle, interested themselves very warmly (he being the last of his line) to see him married.

I congratulated her upon her prospects. She received my compliments with a great deal of self-complacency.

She liked the gentleman still more at his next visit; and yet he made no particular address to her, although an opportunity was given him for it. This was wondered at, as my uncle had introduced him into our family declaredly as a visitor to my sister. But as we are ever ready to make excuses when in good humor with ourselves for the perhaps not unwilful slights of those whose approbation we wish to engage; so my sister found out a reason much to Mr. Lovelace's advantage for his not improving the opportunity that was given him. It was bashfulness, truly, in him. [Bashfulness in Mr. Lovelace, my dear!] Indeed, gay and lively as he is, he has not the *look* of an impudent man. But I fancy, it is many, many years ago since he was bashful.

In his third visit, Bella governed herself by this kind and considerate principle; so that, according to her own account of the

* Her grandfather, in order to invite her to him as often as her other friends would spare her, indulged her in erecting and fitting up a dairy-house in her own taste. When finished, it was so much admired for its elegant simplicity and convenience, that the whole seat (before, of old time, from its situation called *The Grove*) was generally known by the name of *The Dairy house*. Her grandfather in particular was fond of having it so called.

THE HISTORY OF

... might have spoken out. But he was still *bash* not able to overcome this *unreasonable reverence*. went off as the former.

... not of her council. I was still absent. And it was upon between my aunt Hervey and her, that she was to be solemn and shy in his next visit, if there were not a peculiarity in his address to her.

... but my sister, it seems, had not considered the matter well. ... as was not the way, as it proved, to be taken for matters of mere omission, with a man of Mr. Lovelace's penetration. Nor with any man; since if love has not taken root deep enough to cause it to shoot out into declaration, if an opportunity be fairly given for it, there is little room to expect that the blighting winds of anger or resentment will bring it forward. Then my poor sister is not naturally good-humored. This is too well-known a truth for me to endeavor to conceal it, especially from you. She must, therefore, I doubt, have appeared to great disadvantage when she aimed to be worse-tempered than ordinary.

How they managed it in their next conversation I know not. One would be tempted to think, by the issue, that Mr. Lovelace was ungenerous enough to seek the occasion given, and to improve it. Yet he thought fit to put the question too:—but, she says, it was not till, by some means or other (she knew not how) he had wrought her up to such a pitch of displeasure with him, that it was impossible for her to recover herself at the instant. Nevertheless he reurged his question, as expecting a definite answer, without waiting for the return of her temper, or endeavoring to mollify her, so that she was under a necessity of persisting in her denial, yet gave him reason to think she did not dislike his address, only the manner of it; his court being rather made to her mother than to herself, as if he was sure of *her* consent at any time.

And thus, as Mr. Lovelace thought fit to *take it*, had he his answer from my sister. It was with very great regret, as he pretended, [I doubt the man is an hypocrite, my dear] that he acquiesced in it. "So much determinedness; such a noble firmness in my sister, that there was no hope of prevailing upon her to alter sentiments she had adopted on full consideration." He sighed, as Bella told us, when he took his leave of her; "Profoundly sighed; grasped her hand, and kissed it with *such* an ardor—Withdrew with *such* an air of solemn respect—She had him then before her.—She could almost find in her heart, although he had vexed her, to pity him." A good intentional preparative to love, this pity; since, at the time, she little thought that he would not renew his offer.

He waited on my mother after he had taken leave of Bella,

and reported his ill-success in so respectful a manner, as well with regard to my sister as to the whole family, and with so much concern that he was not accepted as a relation to it, that it left upon them all (my brother being then, as I have said, in Scotland) impressions in his favor, and a belief that this matter would certainly be brought on again. But Mr. Lovelace going up directly to town, where he stayed a whole fortnight, and meeting there with my uncle Antony, to whom he regretted his niece's cruel resolution not to change her state, it was seen there was a total end of the affair.

My sister was not wanting to herself on this occasion. She made a virtue of necessity, and the man was quite another man with her. "A vain creature! too well knowing his advantages—yet those not what she had conceived them to be! Cool and warm by fits and starts; an ague-like lover. A steady man, a man of virtue, a man of morals, was worth a thousand of such gay flutterers. Her sister Clary might think it worth her while, perhaps, to try to engage such a man; she had patience; she was mistress of persuasion; and, indeed, to do the girl justice, had *something* of a person; but as for *her* she would not have a man of whose heart she could not be sure for one moment; no, not for the world; and most sincerely glad was she that she had rejected him."

But when Mr. Lovelace returned into the country he thought fit to visit my father and mother, hoping, as he told them, that however unhappy he had been in the rejection of the wished-for alliance, he might be allowed to keep up an acquaintance and friendship with a family which he should always respect. And then, unhappily, as I may say, was I at home and present.

It was immediately observed that his attention was fixed on me. My sister, as soon as he was gone, in a spirit of bravery, seemed desirous to promote his address should it be tendered.

My aunt Hervey was there, and was pleased to say we should make the finest couple in England—if my sister had no objection. No, indeed! with a haughty toss, was my sister's reply. It would be strange if she had, after the denial she had given him upon full deliberation.

My mother declared that *her* only dislike of his alliance with either daughter was on account of his reputed faulty morals.

My uncle Harlowe, that his daughter Clary, as he delighted to call me from childhood, would reform him, if any woman in the world could.

My uncle Antony gave his approbation in high terms, but referred, as my aunt had done, to my sister.

She repeated her contempt of him, and declared that were there not another man in England she would not have him. She

was ready, on the contrary, she could assure them, to resign her pretensions under hand and seal, if Miss Clary were taken with his tinsel, and if every one else approved of his address to the girl.

My father, indeed, after a long silence, being urged by my uncle Antony to speak his mind, said, That he had a letter from his son on his hearing of Mr. Lovelace's visits to his daughter Arabella, which he had not shown to anybody but my mother; that treaty being at an end when he received it;—that in this letter he expressed great dislike to an alliance with Mr. Lovelace on the score of his immoralities; that he knew, indeed, there was an old grudge between them, but that, being desirous to prevent all occasions of disunion and animosity in his family, he would suspend the declaration of his own mind till his son arrived, and till he had heard his further objections; that he was the more inclined to make his son this compliment, as Mr. Lovelace's general character gave but too much ground for his son's dislike of him; adding that he had heard (so, he supposed, had every one) that he was a very extravagant man; that he had contracted debts in his travels; and indeed, he was pleased to say, he had the air of a spendthrift.

These particulars I had partly from my aunt Hervey, and partly from my sister, for I was called out as soon as the subject was entered upon. When I returned my uncle Antony asked me how I should like Mr. Lovelace? Everybody saw, he was pleased to say, that I had made a conquest.

I immediately answered that I did not like him at all; he seemed to have too good an opinion both of his person and parts to have any great regard to his wife, let him marry whom he would.

My sister particularly was pleased with this answer, and confirmed it to be just, with a compliment to my judgment—for it was *hers*.

But the very next day Lord M. came to Harlowe Place [I was then absent]; and in his nephew's name made a proposal in form, declaring that it was the ambition of all his family to be related to ours, and he hoped his kinsman would not have such an answer on the part of the younger sister as he had on that of the elder.

In short, Mr. Lovelace's visits were admitted as those of a man who had not deserved disrespect from our family; but as to his address to me, with a reservation, as above, on my father's part, that he would determine nothing without his son. My discretion as to the rest was confided in, for still I had the same objections as to the man, nor would I, when we were better acquainted, hear anything but general talk from him, giving him no opportunity of conversing with me in private.

But this indifference on my side was the means of procuring him one very great advantage, since upon it was grounded that correspondence by letter which succeeded, and which, had it been to be begun when the family animosity broke out, would never have been entered into on my part. The occasion was this :

My uncle Hervey has a young gentleman entrusted to his care whom he has thoughts of sending abroad, a year or two hence, to make the grand tour, as it is called ; and finding Mr. Lovelace could give a good account of everything necessary for a young traveller to observe upon such an occasion, he desired him to write down a description of the courts and countries he had visited, and what was most worthy of curiosity in them.

He consented on condition that I would *direct* his subjects, as he called it ; and as every one had heard his manner of writing commended, and thought his narratives might be agreeable amusements in winter evenings, and that he could have no opportunity particularly to address me in them, since they were to be read in full assembly before they were given to the young gentleman, I made the less scruple to write, and to make observations, and put questions for our further information—Still the less, perhaps, as I love writing, and those who do are fond, you know, of occasions to use the pen ; and then, having every one's consent, and my uncle Hervey's desire that I would write, I thought that if I had been the only scrupulous person, it would have shown a particularity that a vain man might construe to his advantage, and which my sister would not fail to animadvert upon.

You have seen some of these letters, and have been pleased with his account of persons, places, and things ; and we have both agreed that he was no common observer upon what he had seen.

My sister herself allowed that the man had a tolerable knack of writing and describing ; and my father, who had been abroad in his youth, said that his remarks were curious, and showed him to be a person of reading, judgment, and taste.

Thus was a kind of correspondence begun between him and me, with general approbation, while every one wondered at, and was pleased with, his patient veneration of me, for so they called it. However, it was not doubted but he would soon be more importunate, since his visits were more frequent, and he acknowledged to my aunt Hervey a passion for me, accompanied with an awe that he had never known before, to which he attributed what he called his but *seeming* acquiescence with my father's pleasure, and the distance I kept him at.

I must break off here, but will continue the subject the very first opportunity. Meantime, I am

Your most affectionate friend and servant,

CL. HARLOWE.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.

Jan. 15.

SUCH, my dear, was the situation Mr. Lovelace and I were in when my brother arrived from Scotland. The moment Mr. Lovelace's visits were mentioned to him, he, without either hesitation or apology, expressed his disapprobation of them. He found great flaws in his character; and took the liberty to say in so many words, that he wondered how it came into the heads of his uncles to encourage such a man for *either* of his sisters: at the same time returning his thanks to my father for declining his consent till *he* arrived, in such a manner, I thought, as a superior would do, when he commended an inferior for having well performed his duty in his absence.

He justified his avowed inveteracy by common fame, and by what he had known of him at college; declaring, that he had ever hated him; ever should hate him; and would never own *him* for a brother, or me for a sister, if I married him.

That early antipathy I have heard accounted for in this manner.

He found my sister, who waited but for the occasion, ready to join him in his resentments against the man he hated. She utterly disclaimed all manner of regard for him. "Never liked him at all:—his estate was certainly much encumbered: it was impossible it should be otherwise; so entirely devoted as he was to his pleasures. He kept no house; had no equipage: nobody pretended that he wanted pride: the reason therefore was easy to be guessed at." And then did she boast of, and my brother praise her for, refusing him: and both joined on all occasions to depreciate him, and not seldom *made* the occasion; their displeasure against him causing every subject to run into this, if it began not with it.

Their behavior to him, when they could not help seeing him, was very cold and disobliging; but as yet not directly affrontive. For they were in hopes of prevailing upon my father to forbid his visits. But as there was nothing in his behavior, that might warrant such a treatment of a man of his birth and fortune, they succeeded not: and then they were very earnest with *me* to forbid them. I asked, what authority I had to take such a step in my father's house; and when my behavior to him was so distant, that he seemed to be as much the guest of any other person of the family, themselves excepted, as mine?—In revenge, they told *me*, that it was cunning management between us; and that we both understood one another better than we pretended to do. And at last they gave such a loose to their passions, all of a sudden, as I may say, that instead of withdrawing, as they used to do when he came, they threw themselves in his way purposely to affront him.

Mr. Lovelace, you may believe, very ill brooked this: but nevertheless contented himself to complain of it to me: in high

terms, however, telling me, that but for my sake, my brother's treatment of him was not to be borne.

But Mr. Lovelace is a man not easily brought to give up his purpose, especially in a point wherein he pretends his heart is so much engaged : and no absolute prohibition having been given, things went on for a little while as before : for I saw plainly, that to have denied myself to his visits (which however I declined receiving as often as I could) was to bring forward some desperate issue between the two ; since the offence so readily given on one side was brooked by the other only out of consideration to me.

And thus did my brother's rashness lay me under an obligation where I would least have owed it.

The intermediate proposals of Mr. Symmes and Mr. Mullins, both (in turn) encouraged by my brother, induced him to be more patient for a while, as nobody thought me over-forward in Mr. Lovelace's favor ; for he hoped that he should engage my father and uncles to approve of the one or the other in opposition to the man he hated. But when he found that I had interest enough to disengage myself from the addresses of those gentlemen, as I had (before he went to Scotland, and before Mr. Lovelace visited here) of Mr. Wyerley's, he then kept no measures : and first set himself to upbraid me for a supposed prepossession, which he treated as if it were criminal ; and then to insult Mr. Lovelace in person, at Mr. Edward Symmes's, the brother of the other Symmes, two miles off ; and no good Dr. Lewen being there to interpose, the unhappy rencounter followed. My brother was disarmed, as you have heard ; and on being brought home, and giving us ground to suppose he was much worse hurt than he really was, and a fever ensuing, every one flamed out ; and all was laid at my door.

Mr. Lovelace for three days together sent twice each day to inquire after my brother's health ; and although he received rude and even shocking returns, he thought fit on the fourth day to make in person the same inquiries ; and received still greater incivilities from my two uncles, who happened to be both there. My father also was held by force from going to him with his sword in his hand, although he had the gout upon him.

I fainted away with terror, seeing every one so violent, and hearing Mr. Lovelace swear that he would not depart till he had made my uncles ask his pardon for the indignities he had received at their hands ; a door being held fast locked between him and them. My mother all the time was praying and struggling to withhold my father in the great parlor. Meanwhile my sister, who had treated Mr. Lovelace with virulence, came in to me, and insulted me as fast as I recovered. But when Mr. Lovelace was told how ill I was, he departed ; nevertheless vowing revenge.

Your ever grateful and affectionate,

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

*Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.**Harlowe Place, Jan. 20.*

I WILL now resume my narrative of proceedings here. My brother being in a good way, although you may be sure that his resentments are rather heightened than abated by the galling disgrace he had received, my friends (my father and uncles, however, if not my brother and sister) begin to think that I have been treated unkindly.

Nevertheless I believe they all think that I receive letters from Mr. Lovelace. But Lord M. being inclined rather to support than to blame his nephew, they seem to be so much afraid of Mr. Lovelace, that they do not put it to me whether I do or not; conniving, on the contrary, as it should seem, at the only method left to allay the vehemence of a spirit which they have so much provoked; for he still insists upon satisfaction from my uncles; and this possibly (for he wants not art) as the best way to be introduced again with some advantage into our family. And indeed my aunt Hervey has put it to my mother, whether it were not best to prevail upon my brother to take a turn to his Yorkshire estate (which he was intending to do before) and to stay there till all is blown over.

But this is very far from being his intention: for he has already begun to hint again, that he shall never be easy or satisfied till I am married; and, finding neither Mr. Symmes nor Mr. Mullins will be accepted, has proposed Mr. Wyerley once more, on the score of his great passion for me. This I have again rejected; and but yesterday he mentioned one who has applied to him by letter, making high offers. This is Mr. Solmes; *rich* Solmes you know they call him. But this application has not met with the attention of one single soul.

If none of his schemes of getting me married take effect, he has thoughts, I am told, of proposing to me to go to Scotland, that as the compliment is, I may put his house there in such order as our own is in. But this my mother intends to oppose for her own sake; because, having relieved her, as she is pleased to say, of the household cares (for which my sister, you know, has no turn) they must again devolve upon her if I go. And if *she* did not oppose it, *I* should; for believe me, I have no mind to be his housekeeper; and I am sure, were I to go with him, I should be treated rather as a servant than a sister.—Perhaps, not the better because I am his sister.—And if Mr. Lovelace should follow me, things might be worse than they are now.

But I have besought my mother, who is apprehensive of Mr. Lovelace's visits, and for fear of whom my uncles never stir out without arms and armed servants (my brother also being near

well enough to go abroad) to procure me permission to be your guest for a fortnight, or so.—

Just now, my mother has rejoiced me with the news that my requested permission is granted.

As I have no reason to doubt a welcome from your good mother, I will put everything in order here, and be with you in two or three days.

Meantime, I am

Your most affectionate

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.

[After her return from her.]

Harlowe Place, Feb. 20,

I BEG your excuse for not writing sooner! Alas, my dear, I have sad prospects before me! My brother and sister have succeeded in all their views. They have found out another lover for me; an hideous one! — Yet he is encouraged by everybody. No wonder that I was ordered home so suddenly. — It was for fear, as I have been informed, that I should have entered into any concert with Mr. Lovelace, had I known their motive for commanding me home; apprehending 'tis evident, that I should dislike the man they had to propose to me.

And well might they apprehend so: — for who do you think he is? — No other than *Solmes!* — Could you have believed it? — And they are all determined too; my mother with the rest! — Dear, dear excellence! how could she be thus brought over, when I am assured, that on his first being proposed she was pleased to say, That had Mr. Solmes the *Indies* in possession, and would endow me with them, she would not think him deserving of her Clarissa!

The reception I met with at my return, so different from what I used to meet with on every little absence, (and now I had been from them three weeks) convinced me that I was to suffer for the happiness I had had in your company and conversation, for that most agreeable period. I will give you an account of it.

My brother met me at the door, and gave me his hand when I stepped out of the chariot. He bowed very low: "Pray, Miss, favor me" — I thought it in good humor; but found it afterwards mock respect: and so he led me in great form, I prattling all the way, inquiring of everybody's health, (although I was so soon to see them, and there was hardly time for answers) into the great parlor; where were my father, mother, my two uncles, and sister

I was struck to the heart as soon as I entered, to see a solemnity, which I had been so little used to on the like occasions in the countenances of every dear relation. They all kept their seats. I ran to my father, and kneeled : then to my mother : and met from both a cold salute : from my father a blessing but half pronounced : my mother indeed called me child ; but embraced me not with her usual indulgent ardor.

After I had paid my duty to my uncles, and my compliments to my sister, which she received with solemn and stiff form, I was bid to sit down. But my heart was full : and I said it became me to stand, if I *could* stand, upon a reception so awful and unusual. I was forced to turn my face from them, and pull out my handkerchief.

My unbrotherly accuser hereupon stood forth, and charged me with having received no less than *five or six visits* at Miss Howe's from the man they had all so much reason to hate [that was the expression ;] notwithstanding the commands I had had to the contrary. And he bid me deny it, if I could.

I had never been used, I said to deny the truth, nor would I now. I owned I had in the three weeks past seen the person I presumed he meant, *oftener* than five or six times. But he always asked for Mrs. or Miss Howe, when he came.

I proceeded, that I had reason to believe, that both Mrs. Howe and Miss, as matters stood, would much rather have excused his visits ; but they had more than once apologized, that having not the same reason my papa had to forbid him their house, his rank and fortune entitled him to civility.

You see, my dear, I made not the pleas I might have made.

My brother seemed ready to give a loose to his passion : my father put on the countenance which always portends a gathering storm : my uncles mutteringly whispered : and my sister aggravatingly held up her hands. While I begged to be heard out ; — and my mother said, "Let the *child*," that was her kind word, "be heard."

I hoped, I said, there was no harm done : that it became not me to prescribe to Mrs. or Miss Howe who should be their visitors, that Mrs. Howe was always diverted with the raillery that passed between Miss and him : that I had no reason to challenge *her* guest for *my* visitor, as I should seem to have done had I refused to go into their company when he was with them ; that I had never seen him out of the presence of one, or both of those ladies ; and had signified to him once, on his urging for a few moments' private conversation with me, that unless a reconciliation were effected between my family and his, he must not expect that I would countenance his visits, much less give him an opportunity of that sort.

Mr. Solmes came in before we had done tea. My uncle Antony presented him to me, as a gentleman he had a particular friendship for. My uncle Harlowe in terms equally favorable for him. My father said, Mr. Solmes is my friend, Clarissa Harlowe. My mother looked at him, and looked at me, now and then, as he sat near me, I thought with concern. — I at *her*, with eyes appealing for pity. At *him*, when I could glance at him, with disgust little short of affrightment. While my brother and sister Mr. *Solmes*'d him, and *sir'd* him up, at every word. So caressed, in short, by all; — yet such a wretch! — But I will at present only add, my humble thanks and duty to your honored mother (to whom I will particularly write, to express the grateful sense I have of her goodness to me); and that I am

Your ever obliged
CL. HARLOWE.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.

Feb. 24.

THEY drive on here at a furious rate. The man lives here, I think. He courts them, and is more and more a favorite. Such terms! such settlements! That's the cry.

O my dear, that I had not reason to deplore the family fault, immensely rich as they all are!

Hitherto, I seem to be delivered over to my brother, who pretends as great love to me as ever.

You may believe, I have been very sincere with him. But he affects to rally me, and not to believe it possible, that one so dutiful and so discreet as his sister Clary can resolve to disoblige all her friends.

My father and mother industriously avoid giving me opportunity of speaking to them alone. They ask not for my approbation, intending, as it should seem, to *suppose* me into their will. And with them I shall hope to prevail, or with nobody. They have not the *interest* in compelling me, as my brother and sister have: I say less therefore to them, reserving my whole force for an audience with my father, if he would permit me a patient ear. How difficult is it, my dear, to give a negative where both duty and inclination join to make one wish to oblige.

I have already stood the shock of three of this man's particular visits, besides my share in his more general ones; and find it is impossible I should ever endure him.

They had endeavored, it seems, to influence my good Mrs. Norton before I came home—So intent are they to carry their point! And her opinion not being to their liking, she has been told that she would do well to decline visiting here for the pre-

sent ; yet *she* is the person for all the world, next to my mother, the most likely to prevail upon me, were the measures they are engaged in reasonable measures, or such as she could think so.

My aunt likewise having said that she did not think her niece could ever be brought to like Mr. Solmes, has been obliged to learn another lesson.

* I am to have a visit from her to-morrow. And, since I have refused so much as to hear from my brother and sister what the noble settlements are to be, she is to acquaint me with the particulars ; and to receive from me my determination : for my father, I am told, will not have patience to *suppose* that I shall stand in opposition to his will.

Meantime it has been signified to me, that it will be acceptable if I do not think of going to church next Sunday.

The same signification was made me for last Sunday ; and I obeyed. They are apprehensive that Mr. Lovelace will be there with design to come home with me.

Feb. 25, in the evening.

What my brother and sister have said against me I cannot tell :—but I am in heavy disgrace with my father.

I was sent for down to tea. I went with a very cheerful aspect : but had occasion soon to change it.

Such a solemnity in every body's countenance ! My mother's eyes were fixed upon the tea-cups ; and when she looked up, it was heavily, as if her eyelids had weights upon them ; and then not to me. My father sat half-aside in his elbow-chair, that his head might be turned from me, his hands clasped, and waving, as it were, up and down ; his fingers, poor dear gentleman ! in motion, as if angry to the very ends of them. My sister sat swelling. My brother looked at me with scorn, having measured me, as I may say, with his eyes as I entered, from head to foot. My aunt was there, and looked upon me as if with kindness restrained, bending coldly to my compliment to her as she sat ; and then cast an eye first on my brother, and then on my sister, as if to give the reason [so I am willing to construe it] of her unusual stiffness :—Bless me, my dear ! that they should choose to intimidate rather than invite a mind, till now, not thought either unpersuadable or ungenerous !

I took my seat. Shall I make tea, madam, to my mother ?—I always used, you know, my dear, to make tea.

No. a very short sentence, in one very short word, was the expressive answer. And she took the canister in her own hand.

My brother bid the footman who attended leave the room ; I said he, will give the water.

My heart was in agitation, I did not know what to do with myself. What is to follow? thought I.

Just after the second dish, out stept my mother—A word with you, sister Hervey! taking her hand. Presently my sister dropt away. Then my brother. And I was left alone with my father.

He looked so very sternly, that my heart failed me as twice or thrice I would have addressed myself to him: nothing but solemn silence on all sides having passed before.

At last, I asked, if it were his pleasure that I should pour him out another dish.

He answered me with the same angry monosyllable, which I had received from my mother before: and then arose, and walked about the room. I arose too, with intent to throw myself at his feet; but was too much overawed by his sternness, even to make such an expression of my duty to him as my heart overflowed with.

At last, as he supported himself, because of his gout, on the back of a chair, I took a little more courage; and approaching him, besought him to acquaint me in what I had offended him.

He turned from me, and in a strong voice, Clarissa Harlowe said he, know that I will be obeyed.

God forbid, sir, that you should not!—I have never yet opposed your will—

Nor I your whimsies, Clarissa Harlowe, interrupted he.—Don't let me run the fate of all who shew indulgence to your sex: to be the more contradicted for mine to you.

My father, you know, my dear, has not (any more than my brother) a kind opinion of our sex; although there is not a more condescending wife in the world than my mother.

I was going to make protestations of duty—No protestations, girl! No words! I will not be prated to! I will be obeyed! I have no child, I *will* have no child, but an obedient one.

Sir, you never had reason, I hope—

Tell me not what I never *had*, but what I *have*, and what I *shall* have.

Good sir, be pleased to hear me—My brother and my sister, I fear—

Your brother and sister shall not be spoken against, girl!—They have a just concern for the honor of my family.

And I hope, sir—

Hope nothing.—Tell me not of *hopes*, but of *facts*. I ask nothing of you but what is in your *power* to comply with, and what it is your *duty* to comply with.

Then, sir, I *will* comply with it—But yet I hope from your goodness—

No expostulations! no *buts*, girl! no qualifying! I will be

obeyed, I tell you; and cheerfully too! —or you are no child of mine!

I wept.

Let me beseech you, my dear and ever-honored papa (and I dropt down on my knees) that I may have only yours and my mamma's will, and not my brother's, to obey.

I was going on; but he was pleased to withdraw, leaving me on the floor; saying, that he would not hear me thus by subtilty and cunning aiming to distinguish away my duty; repeating, that he *would* be obeyed.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.

Feb. 26, in the morning.

My aunt made me a visit this morning as soon as it was light. She tells me that I was left alone with my father yesterday, on purpose that he might talk with me on my expected obedience; but that he owned he was put beside his purpose by his impatience but to suppose that such a gentle spirit as mine had hitherto seemed to be, should presume to dispute his will in a point where the advantage of the whole family was to be so greatly promoted by my compliance.

I find by a few words which dropt unawares from my aunt, that they have an absolute dependence upon what they suppose to be meekness in my temper. But in this they may be mistaken; for I verily think, upon a strict examination of myself, that I have almost as much in me of my father's as of my mother's family.

My aunt advises me to submit for the present to the interdicts they have laid me under; and indeed to encourage Mr. Solmes's address. I have absolutely refused the latter, let what will (as I have told her) be the consequence. The visiting prohibition I will conform to. But as to that of not corresponding with you, nothing but the menace that our letters shall be intercepted can engage my observation of it.

Your affectionate,

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Miss Howe to Miss Clarissa Harlowe.

Feb. 27.

What odd heads some people have! —Miss Clarissa Harlowe to be sacrificed in marriage to Mr. Roger Solmes! —Astonishing!

I communicated to my mother the account you give of your strange reception; also what a horrid wretch they have found out

for you ; and the compulsory treatment they give you. It only set her on magnifying her lenity to me on my *tyrannical* behavior, as she *will* call it [mothers must have their way, you know, my dear] to the man whom she so warmly recommends, against whom it seems there can be no just exception ; and expatiating upon the complaisance I owe her for her indulgence. So I believe I must communicate to her nothing further—especially as I know she would condemn the correspondence between us, and that between you and Lovelace, as clandestine and undutiful proceedings, and divulge our secret besides : for *duty implicit* is her cry.

You are pleased to say, and *upon your word too!* that your *regards* (a mighty quaint word for *affections*) are not so much engaged, as some of your friends suppose, to another person. What need you give one to imagine, my dear, that the last month or two has been a period extremely favorable to that *other* person ;—whom it has made an obliger of the niece for his patience with the uncles.

But to pass that by—*so much* engaged ! —*How much*, my dear ?—Shall I infer ? *Some of your friends* suppose a great deal. You seem to own a *little*.

Don't be angry. It is all fair, because you have not acknowledged to me that *little*. People, I have heard you say, who affect secrets, always excite curiosity.

But you proceed with a kind of drawback upon your averment, as if recollection had given you a doubt—*you know not yourself, if they be* [so much engaged.] Was it necessary to say this to me ?—and to say it *upon your word* too ?—But you know best—yet you don't neither, I believe. For a beginning love is acted by a subtle spirit ; and oftentimes discovers itself to a bystander, when the person possessed (why should I not call *possessed?*) knows not that it has such a demon.

But further you say, what *PREFERABLE* favor you may have for him to any other person, is owing more to the usage he has received, and for your sake borne, than to any personal consideration.

It is my humble opinion, I tell you frankly, that on inquiry it will come out to be LOVE—don't start, my dear !—has not your man himself had natural philosophy enough to observe to your aunt Hervey, that love takes the deepest root in the steadiest minds ? The deuce take his sly penetration, I was going to say : for this was six or seven weeks ago.

Your ever affectionate,
ANNA HOWE.

*Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.**Wednesday, March 1.*

You both nettled and alarmed me, my dearest Miss Howe, by the concluding part of your last.

Indeed I would not be *in love* with him, as it is called, for the world: first, because I have no opinion of his morals; and think it a fault in which our whole family (my brother excepted) has had a share, that he was permitted to visit us with a hope; which, however being distant, did not, as I have observed heretofore, entitle any of us to call him to account for such of his immoralities as came to our ears. Next, because I think him to be a vain man, capable of triumphing (secretly at least) over a person whose heart he thinks he has engaged. And, thirdly, because the assiduities and veneration which you impute to him, seem to carry a haughtiness in them, as if he thought his address had a merit in it, that would be more than an equivalent to a woman's love.

Indeed, my dear, THIS man is not THE man. I have great objections to him. My heart *throbs* not after him. I *glow* not, but with indignation against myself for having given room for such an imputation. — But you must not, my dearest friend, construe common gratitude into love. I cannot bear that you should. But if ever I should have the misfortune to think it love, I promise you *upon my word*, which is the same as *upon my honor*, that I will acquaint you with it.

Your equally affectionate and grateful,

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

*Miss Howe to Clarissa.**Thursday morning, March, 2.*

Talk of the devil, is an old saying. The lively wretch has made me a visit, and is but just gone away. He is all impatience and resentment at the treatment you meet with; and full of apprehensions too, that they will carry their point with you.

I told him my opinion, that you will never be brought to think of such a man as Solmes; but that it will probably end in a composition, never to have either.

No man, he said, whose fortunes and alliance are so considerable, ever had so little favor from a woman for whose sake he had borne so much.

I told him my mind as freely as I used to do. But whoever was in fault, self being judge? He complained of spies set upon his conduct, and to pry into his life and morals, and this by your brother and uncles.

I told him, that this was very hard upon him ; and the more so as neither his life nor morals perhaps would stand a fair inquiry.

He smiled, and called himself *my servant*.—The occasion was too fair, he said, for Miss Howe, who never spared him, to let it pass. But, Lord help the shallow souls of the Harlowes ! Would I believe it ? They were for turning plotters upon *him*. They had best take care he did not pay them in their own coin.

Your own

ANNA HOWE.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.

Wedn. March 1.

I NOW take up my pen, to lay before you the inducements and motives which my friends have to espouse so earnestly the address of this Mr. Solmes.

You must know, that from the last conversation that passed between my aunt and me, it comes out, that this *sudden* vehemence on my brother's and sister's parts, was owing to stronger reasons than to the college-begun antipathy on his side, or to slighted love on hers ; to wit, to an apprehension that my uncles intended to follow my grandfather's example in my favor ; at least in a higher degree than they wish they should. An apprehension founded it seems on a conversation between my two uncles and my brother and sister ; which my aunt communicated to me in confidence, as an argument to prevail upon me to accept of Mr. Solmes's *noble* settlements : urging, that such a seasonable compliance would frustrate my brother's and sister's views, and establish me forever in the love of my father and uncles.

I have more than once mentioned to you the darling view some of us have long had of *raising a family*, as it is called ; a reflection, as I have often thought, upon our own ; which is no inconsiderable or upstart one, on either side : my mother's especially.—A view too frequently it seems entertained by families which, having great substance, cannot be satisfied without rank or title.

My uncles had once extended this view to each of us three children ; urging, that as they themselves intended not to marry, we each of us might be so portioned, and so advantageously matched, as that our posterity, if not ourselves, might make a first figure in our country.—While my brother, as the only son, thought the two girls might be very well provided for by ten or fifteen thousand pounds apiece ; and that all the real estates in the family ; to wit, my grandfather's, and two uncles', and the remainder of their respective personal estates, together with what he had an expectation of from his godmother, would make such

a noble fortune, and give him such an interest, as might entitle him to hope for a peerage. Nothing less would satisfy his ambition.

But when my grandfather's will (of the purport of which in my particular favor, until it was opened, I was as ignorant as they) had lopped off one branch of my brother's expectation, he was extremely dissatisfied with me. Nobody indeed was pleased; for although every one loved me, yet being the youngest child, father, uncles, brother, sister, all thought themselves postponed, as to matter of right and power: and my father himself could not bear that I should be made sole, as I may call it, and independent: for such the will, as to that estate and the powers it gave (unaccountably as they all said) made me.

To obviate therefore every one's jealousy, I gave up to my father's management, as you know, not only the estate, but the money bequeathed me (which was a moiety of what my grandfather had by him at his death; the other moiety being bequeathed to my sister); contenting myself to take as from his bounty what he was pleased to allow me, without desiring the least addition to my annual stipend. And then I hoped I had laid all envy asleep: but still my brother and sister (jealous, as now is evident, of my two uncles, favor for me, and of the pleasure I had given my father and them of this act of duty) were every now-and-then occasionally doing me covert ill offices: of which, however, I took the less notice, when I was told of them, as I thought I had removed the cause of their envy; and I imputed every thing of that sort to the petulance they are both pretty much noted for.

My brother's acquisition then took place. This made us all very happy; and he went down to take possession of it; and his absence (on so good an account too) made us still happier. Then followed Lord M.'s proposal for my sister: and this was an additional felicity for the time. I have told you how exceedingly good-humored it made my sister.

You know how that went off: you know what came on in its place.

My brother then returned, and we were all wrong again; and Bella, as I observed in my letters above-mentioned, had an opportunity to give herself the credit of having refused Mr. Lovelace, on the score of his reputed faulty morals. This united my brother and sister in one cause. They set themselves on all occasions to depreciate Mr. Lovelace, and his *family* too.

These desirable views answered, how rich, how splendid shall we all three be! And I—what obligations shall I lay upon them all!—And that only by doing an act of duty so suitable to my character and manner of thinking; if indeed I am the generous as well as doubtful creature I have hitherto made them believe I am.

Your truly affectionate,

CL. HARLOWE.

*Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.**Thursday evening, March 2.*

I must take or seek the occasion to apply to my mother for her mediation; for I am in danger of having a day fixed, and antipathy taken for bashfulness. — Should not sisters *be* sisters to each other? Should they not make a common cause of it, as I may say, a cause of sex, on such occasions as the present? Yet mine, in support of my brother's selfishness, and no doubt, in concert with him, has been urging in full assembly it seems (and that with an earnestness peculiar to herself when she set upon anything) that an absolute day be given me; and if I comply not, to be told, that it shall be to the forfeiture of all my fortunes, and of all their love.

She need not be so officious: my *brother's* interest, without hers, is strong enough; for he has found means to confederate all the family against me. Upon some fresh provocation, or new intelligence concerning Mr. Lovelace (I know not what it is) they have bound themselves, or are to bind themselves, by a signed paper, to one another to carry their point in favor of Mr. Solmes, in support of my *father's authority*, as it is called, and against Mr. Lovelace, as a libertine, and an enemy to the family: and if so, I am sure, I may say against *me*. — How impolitic in them all, to join two people in one interest, whom they wish forever to keep asunder!

An interruption obliges me to conclude myself, in some hurry, as well as fright, what I must ever be,

Yours more than my own,
CLARISSA HARLOWE.

*Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.**Friday, March 3.*

O MY dear friend, I have had a sad conflict! Trial upon trial; conference upon conference! — But what law, what ceremony, can give a man a right to a heart which abhors him more than it does any living creature?

I went down this morning when breakfast was ready with a very uneasy heart, from what Hannah had informed me of yesterday afternoon; wishing for an opportunity, however, to appeal to my mother, in hopes to engage her interest in my behalf, and purposing to try to find one when she retired to her own apartment after breakfast: but, unluckily, there was the odious Solmes sitting asquat between my mother and sister, with *so much assurance in his looks!*

Had the wretch kept his seat, it might have been well enough but the bent and broad-shouldered creature must needs rise, and stalk towards a chair; which was just by that which was set for me.

I removed it to a distance, as if to make way to my own; and down I sat, abruptly I believe; what I had heard all in my head.

But this was not enough to daunt him. The man is a very confident, he is a very bold, staring man! — Indeed my dear, the man is very confident!

He took the removed chair, and drew it so near mine, squatting in it with his ugly weight, that he had pressed upon my hoop. — I was so offended (all I had heard, as I said, in my head) that I removed to another chair. I own I had too little command of myself. It gave my brother and sister too much advantage. I dare say they took it. But I did it involuntarily, I think. I could not help it, I knew not what I did.

I saw that my father was excessively displeased. When angry, no man's countenance ever shews it so much as my father's. Clarissa Harlowe! said he with a big voice — and there he stopped. — Sir! said I, trembling and courtseying (for I *had* not then sat down again) and put my chair nearer the wretch, and sat down — my face, as I could feel, all in a glow.

Make tea, child, said my kind mamma: sit by me, love: and make tea.

I removed with pleasure to the seat the man had quitted; and being thus indulgently put into employment, soon recovered myself, and in the course of the breakfasting officiously asked two or three questions of Mr. Solmes, which I would not have done, but to make up with my father. —

Before the usual breakfast-time was over, my father withdrew with my mother, telling her he wanted to speak to her. Then my sister and next my aunt (who was with us) dropped away.

My brother gave himself some airs of insult, which I understood well enough; but which Mr. Solmes could make nothing of: and at last he arose from *his* seat — Sister, said he, I have a curiosity to shew you. I will fetch it. And away he went shutting the door close after him.

I saw all that this was for. I arose; the man hemming up for a speech, rising, and beginning to set his splay-feet [indeed, my dear, the man in all his ways is hateful to me] in an approaching posture. — I will save my brother the trouble of bringing to me his curiosity, said I. I courtesied — Your servant, sir — the man cried, Madam, madam, twice, and looked like a fool. — But away I went — to find my brother, to save my word — but my brother indifferent as the weather was, was gone to walk in the garden with my sister. A plain case, that he had left his *curiosity* with me, and designed to shew me no other.

I had but just got into my own apartment, and began to think of sending Hannah to beg an audience of my mother (the more encouraged by her condescending goodness at breakfast) when Shorey her woman brought me her commands to attend her in her closet.

I went down; but apprehending the subject she intended to talk to me upon, approached her trembling, and my heart in visible palpitations.

She saw my concern. Holding out her kind arms, as she sat, Come kiss me, my dear, said she, with a smile like a sunbeam breaking through the cloud that overshadowed her naturally benign aspect. Why flutters my jewel so?

This preparative sweetness with her goodness just before, confirmed my apprehensions. My mother saw the bitter pill wanted gilding.

O my mamma! was all I could say; and I clasped my arms round her neck, and my face sunk into her bosom.

My child! my child! restrain, said she, your powers of moving! I dare not else trust myself with you. — And my tears trickled down her bosom, as hers bedewed my neck.

O the words of kindness, all to be expressed in vain, that flowed from her lips!

Lift up your sweet face, my best child, my own Clarissa Harlowe! — O my daughter, best beloved of my heart, lift up a face so ever amiable to me! — Why these sobs? — Is an apprehended duty so affecting a thing, that before I can speak — but I am glad, my love, you can guess at what I have to say to you. I am spared the pains of breaking to you what was a task upon me reluctantly enough undertaken to break to you.

Then rising, she drew a chair near her own, and made me sit down by her, overwhelmed as I was with tears of apprehension of what she had to say, and of gratitude for her truly maternal goodness to me — sobs still my only language.

And drawing her chair still nearer to mine, she put her arms round my neck, and my glowing cheek wet with tears, close to her own: Let me talk to you, my child. Since silence is your choice, hearken to me, and *be* silent.

You knew, my dear, what I every day forego, and undergo, for the sake of peace. Your papa is a very good man, and means well! but he will not be controlled; nor yet persuaded. You have sometimes seemed to pity *me*, that I am obliged to give up every point. Poor man! *his* reputation the less for it; *mine* the greater: yet would I not have his credit, if I could help it, at so dear a rate to *him* and to *myself*. You are a dutiful, a prudent, and a *wise* child, [she was pleased to say, in hope, no doubt, to make *me so*]: you would not add, I am sure, to my trouble! you would

not wilfully break that peace which costs your mother so much to preserve. Obedience is better than sacrifice. O my Clary Harlowe, rejoice my heart by telling me I have apprehended too much ! —I see your concern ! I see your perplexity ! I see your conflict [loosing her arm, and rising, not willing I should see how much she herself was affected]. I will leave you a moment.—Answer me not—[For I was essaying to speak, and had, as soon as she took her dear cheek from mine, dropt down on my knees, my hands clasped, and lifted up in a supplicating manner]. I am not prepared for your irresistible expostulation, she was pleased to say. I will leave you to recollection : and I charge you, on my blessing, that all this my truly maternal tenderness be not thrown away upon you.

And then she withdrew into the next apartment ; wiping her eyes as she went from me ; as mine overflowed ; my heart taking in the whole compass of her meaning.

She soon returned, having recovered more steadiness.

Still on my knees, I had thrown my face across the chair she had sat in.

Look up to me, my Clary Harlowe—no sullenness, I hope !

No, indeed, my ever to be revered mamma. —And I arose. I bent my knee.

She raised me. No kneeling to me, but with knees of duty and compliance. Your heart, not your knees must bend. It is absolutely determined—prepare yourself therefore to receive your *father*, when he visits you by-and-bye, as he would wish to receive *you*. But on this one quarter of an hour depends the peace of my future life, the satisfaction of all the family, and your own security from a man of violence : and I charge you *besides*, on my blessing, that you think of being Mrs. Solmes.

There went the dagger to my heart, and down I sunk : and when I recovered, found myself in the arms of my Hannah, my sister's Betty holding open my reluctantly opened palm, my laces cut, my linen scented with hartshorn ; and my mother gone. Had I been *less* kindly treated, the hated name still forborne to be mentioned, or mentioned with a little more preparation and reserve. I had stood the horrid sound with less visible emotion—but to be bid, on the blessing of a mother so dearly beloved, so truly revered, to think of being MRS. SOLMES—what a denunciation was that.

Shorey came in with a message (delivered in her solemn way) ; Your mamma, miss, is concerned for your disorder ; she expects you down again in an hour ; and bid me say, that she then *hopes everything* from your duty.

I made no reply ; for what could I say ? And leaning upon my Hannah's arm. withdrew to my own apartment.

In about half an hour, my mother returned. She found me in tears. She took my hand: it is my part evermore, said she, to be of the acknowledging side. I believe I have needlessly exposed myself to your opposition, by the method I have taken with you. I first began as if I *expected* a denial and by my indulgence brought it upon myself.

Do not, my dearest mamma! do not say so!

Were the occasion for this debate, proceeded she, to have risen from myself; were it in my power to dispense with your compliance; you too well know what you can do with me.

When I came to you a second time, knowing that your opposition would avail you nothing, I refused to hear your reasons: and in this I was wrong too, because a young creature who loves to reason, and *used* to love to be convinced by reason, ought to have all her objections heard: I now therefore, this third time, see you; and am come resolved to hear all you have to say: and let me, my dear, by my patience engage your gratitude; your *generosity*, I will call it; because it is to you I speak, who used to have a mind wholly generous.—Let me, if your heart *be really free*, let me see what it will induce you to do to oblige me: and so as you permit your usual discretion to govern you, I will hear all you have to say; but with this intimation, that say what you will, it will be of no avail elsewhere.

What a dreadful saying is that! but could I engage your pity, madam, it would be somewhat.

You have as much of my pity as of my love. But what is *person*, Clary, with one of your prudence, and *your heart disengaged*.

Should the eye be disgusted, when the heart is to be engaged?—O madam, who can think of marrying when the heart is shocked at the first appearance, and where the disgust must be confirmed by every conversation afterwards?

This, Clary, is owing to your prepossession. Let me not have cause to regret that noble firmness of mind in so young a creature which I thought your glory, and which was my boast in your character. In this instance it would be obstinacy, and want of duty.—Have you not made objections to several—

That was to their *minds*, to their *principles*, madam.—But this man—

Is an honest man, Clary Harlowe. He has a good mind. He is a virtuous man.

He an honest man? *His* a good mind, madam? *He* a virtuous man!—

Nobody denies him these qualities.

Can *he* be an honest man who offers terms that will rob all his own relations of their just expectations—can *his* mind be good—

You, Clary Harlowe, for whose sake he offers so much, are the last person that should make this observation.

Give me leave to say, madam, that a person preferring happiness to fortune, as I do; that want not even what I *have*, and can give up the use of *that*, as an instance of duty—

No more, no more of your merits!—You know you will be a gainer by that cheerful instance of your duty; not a loser. You know you have but *cast your bread upon the waters*—so no more of that!—For it is not understood as a merit by every body, I assure you; though I think it a high one; and so did your father and uncles at the time.

Just then, up came my father, with a sternness in his looks that made me tremble.—He took two or three turns about my chamber, though pained by his gout.—And then said to my mother who was silent as soon as she saw him—

My dear, you are long absent.—Dinner is near ready. What you had to say, lay in a very little compass. Surely, you have nothing to do but to declare *your* will, and *my* will—but perhaps you may be talking of the preparations—let us have you soon down—your daughter in your hand, if worthy of the name.

And down he went, casting his eye upon me with a look so stern, that I was unable to say one word to him, or even for a few minutes to my mother.

My mother, seeing my concern, seemed to pity me. She called me her good child, and kissed me; and told me that my father should not know I had made such opposition. He has kindly furnished us with an excuse for being so long together, said she.—Come, my dear—dinner will be upon table presently—shall we go down?—And took my hand.

This made me start: What, madame, go down to let it be supposed we were talking of *preparations*!—O my beloved mamma, command me not down upon such a supposition.

You see, child, that to stay longer together, will be owning that you are debating about an absolute duty: and that will not be borne. Did not your father himself some days ago tell you, he would be obeyed? I will a third time leave you. I must say something by way of excuse for you: and that you desire not to go down to dinner—that your modesty on the occasion—

O madam! say not my modesty on *such an* occasion: for that will be to give hope—

And design you *not* to give hope?—Perverse girl!—*Rising, and flinging from me*; take more time for consideration!—Since it is necessary, *take* more time—and when I see you next, let me know what blame I have to cast upon myself, or to bear from your father, for my indulgence to you.

She made, however, a little stop at the chamber door; and

seemed to expect that I would have besought her to make the gentlest construction for me ; for, hesitating, she was pleased to say, I suppose you would not have me make a report—

O madam, interrupted I, whose favor can I hope for, if I lose my mamma's ?

To have desired a *favorable* report, you know, my dear, would have been qualifying upon a point that I was too much determined upon to give room for any of my friends to think I have the least hesitation about it. And so my mother went down stairs.

Your sincere and ever affectionate,

CL. HARLOWE.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.

My mother on her return, which was as soon as she had dined, was pleased to inform me, that she told my father, on his questioning her about my *cheerful* compliance (for it seems, the *cheerful* was all that was doubted) that she was willing, on so material a point, to give a child whom she had so *much reason to love* (as she condescended to acknowledge were her words) liberty to say all that was in her heart to say, that her compliance might be the freer : letting him know, that when he came up, she was attending to my pleas ; for that she found I had rather not marry at all.

She told me, that to this my father angrily said, Let her take care—let her take care—that she give me no ground to suspect her of a preference somewhere else. But if it be to ease *her* heart, and not to dispute *my* will, you may hear her out.

So, Clary, said my mother, I am returned in a temper accordingly : and I hope you will not again, by *your* peremptoriness, shew *me* how I ought to treat *you*.

I, said she, have early said all that I thought could be said against the present proposal, on a supposition, that you, who have refused several others (whom I own to be preferable as to person) would *not* approve of it and could I have succeeded, you, Clary, had never heard of it. But if *I* could not, how can *you* expect to prevail ? My great ends, in the task I have undertaken, are the preservation of the family peace, so likely to be overturned ; to reinstate you in the affections of your father and uncles : and to preserve you from a man of violence.—Your father, you must needs think, will flame out, upon your refusal to comply : your uncles are so thoroughly convinced of the consistency of the measure with their favorite views of aggrandizing the family that they are as much determined as your father.—Your aunt Hervey and your uncle Hervey are of the same party. And it is hard, if a father and mother, and uncles and aunt, all conjoined, cannot

be allowed to direct your choice.—Surely, my dear girl, proceeded she [for I was silent all this time] it cannot be, that you are the *more* averse because the *family views* will be promoted by the match—This, I assure you, is what every body must think, if you comply not. Nor, while the man so obnoxious to us all remains unmarried, and *buzzes* about you, will the strongest asseverations you can make of your resolution and wishes to live single, be in the least regarded. And well you know, that were Mr. Lovelace an angel, and your father had made it a point that you should not have him, it would be in vain to dispute his will. As to the prohibition laid upon you (much as I will own against *my* liking) that is owing to the belief that you corresponded by Miss Howe's means with that man; nor do I doubt that you did so.

I answered to every article, in such a manner as I am sure would have satisfied her, could she have been permitted to judge for herself; and I then inveighed with bitterness against the disgraceful prohibitions laid upon me.

They would serve to show me, she replied, how much in earnest my father was. They might be taken off, whenever I thought fit, and no harm done, nor disgrace received. But if I were to be contumacious, I might thank myself for all that would follow.

I sighed. I wept. I was silent.

Shall I, Clary, said she, shall I tell your father that these prohibitions are as unnecessary as I hoped they would be? That you know your *duty*, and will not offer to controvert his will? What say you, my love?

O madam, what can I say to questions so indulgently put!—I do indeed *know* my duty: no creature in the world is more willing to *practise* it: but, pardon me, dearest madam, if I say, that I must bear these prohibitions, if I am to pay so dear to have them taken off.

Determined and perverse, my dear mamma called me: and after walking twice or thrice in anger about the room, she turned to me:—Your heart *free*, Clarissa! How can you tell me your heart is free? Such extraordinary antipathies to a particular person must be owing to extraordinary prepossessions in another's favor!—Tell me, Clary; and tell me truly—Do you not continue to correspond with Mr. Lovelace?

Dearest madam, replied I, you know my motives: to prevent mischief I answered his letters. The reasons for our apprehensions of this sort are not over. You, madam, shall see all the letters that have passed between us. You shall see I have given him no encouragement independent of my duty. And when you have seen them, you will be better able to direct me how, on the condition I have offered, to break entirely with him.

I take you at your word, Clarissa—Give me *his* letters; and the copies of *yours*.

I am sure, madam, you will keep the knowledge that I write, and what I write—

No conditions with your mother—surely my prudence may be trusted to.

I begged her pardon; and besought her to take the key of the private drawer in my escritoir, where they lay, that she herself might see, that I had no reserves to my mother.

She did; and took all his letters, and the copies of mine.—Unconditioned with, she was pleased to say; they shall be yours again, unseen by anybody else.

I thanked her; and she withdrew to read them; saying she would return them, when she had.

* * *

In about an hour my mother returned. Take your letters, Clary: I have nothing, she was pleased to say, to tax your discretion with, as to the wording of yours to him: you have even kept up a proper dignity, as well as observed all the rules of decorum; and you have resented, as you ought to resent, his menacing invectives. In a word, I see not that he can form the least expectations from what you have written, that you will encourage the passion he avows for you. But does he not avow his passion? Have you the least doubt about what must be the issue of this correspondence, if continued? And do you yourself think, when you know the avowed hatred of one side, and the declared defiance of the other, that this *can* be, that it *ought to be* a match?

By no means it can, madam; you will be pleased to observe, that I have said as much to him. But now, madam, that the whole correspondence is before you, I beg your commands what to do in a situation so very disagreeable.

One thing I will tell you, Clary—But I charge you, as you would not have me question the generosity of your spirit, to take no advantage of it, either *mentally* or *verbally*; that I am so much pleased with the offer of your keys to me, made in so cheerful and unreserved a manner, and in the prudence you have shewn in your letters, that were it practicable to bring every one, or your father only, into my opinion, I should readily leave all the rest to your discretion, reserving only to myself the direction or approbation of your future letters; and to see, that you broke off the correspondence as soon as possible. But as it is not, and as I know your father would have no patience with you, should it be acknowledged that you correspond with Mr. Lovelace, or that you *have* corresponded with him since the time he prohibited you so to do; I forbid you to continue such a liberty—Yet, as the case is difficult, let me ask you, what you yourself can propose? Your

heart, you say, is *free*: you own, that you cannot think as matters are circumstanced, that a match with a man so obnoxious as he now is to us all, is proper to be thought of: what do you propose to do?—What, Clary, are your own thoughts of the matter?

Without hesitation thus I answered—What I humbly propose is this: “That I will write to Mr. Lovelace (for I have not answered his last) that he has nothing to do between my father and me: that I neither *ask* his advice, nor *need* it: but that since he thinks he has some pretence for interfering, because of my brother’s avowal of the interest of Mr. Solmes, in displeasure to him, I will assure him (without giving him any reason to impute the assurance to be in the least favourable to himself) that I never will be that man’s. And if,” proceeded I, “I may be permitted to give him this assurance; and Mr. Solmes, in consequence of it, be discouraged from prosecuting his address; let Mr. Lovelace be satisfied or dissatisfied, I will go no further; nor write another line to him; nor ever see him more, if I can avoid it: and I shall have a good excuse for it, without bringing in any of my family.”

Ah! my love!—But what shall we do about the *terms* Mr. Solmes offers? Those are the inducements with every body. He has even given hopes to your brother that he will make exchanges of estates; or at least, that he will purchase the northern one; for you know it must be entirely consistent with the family views, that we increase our interest in this county. Your brother, in short, has given in a plan that captivates us all: and a family so rich in all its branches, and that has its views to honour, must be pleased to see a very great probability of taking rank one day among the principal in the kingdom.

And for the sake of these views, for the sake of this plan of my brother’s, am I, madam, to be given in marriage to a man I never can endure!—O my dear mamma, save me, save me, if you can, from this heavy evil.—I had rather be buried alive, indeed I had, than have that man.

She chid me for my vehemence: but was so good as to tell me, that she would sound my uncle Harlowe, who was then below; and if he encouraged her (or would engage to second her) she would venture to talk to my father herself; and I should hear further in the morning.

She went down to tea, and kindly undertook to excuse my attendance at supper.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.

Sat. March. 4.

WOULD you not have thought that something might have

been obtained in my favour, from an offer so reasonable, from an expedient so proper, as I imagine, to put a tolerable end, as *from myself*, to a correspondence I hardly know how otherwise, with safety to some of my family, to get rid of?—But my brother's plan joined with my father's impatience of contradiction, are irresistible.

I have not been in bed all night; nor am I in the least drowsy.

About eight o'clock Shorey came to me from my mother, with orders to attend her in her chamber.

My mother had been weeping, I saw by her eyes: but her aspect seemed to be less tender, and less affectionate, than the day before; and this, as soon as I entered into her presence, struck me with an awe which gave a great damp to my spirits,

Sit down, Clary Harlowe; I shall talk to you by-and-by: and continued looking into a drawer among laces and linen, in a way neither busy nor unbusy

I believe it was a quarter of an hour before she spoke to me (my heart throbbing with the suspense all the time); and then she asked me coldly what directions I had given for the day?

I shewed her the bill of fare for this day, and to-morrow, if, I said, it pleased her to approve of it.

She made a small alteration in it; but with an air so cold and so solemn, as added to my emotions.

Mr. Harlowe talks of dining out to-day, I think at my brother Antony's—

Mr. Harlowe!—Not my father!—Have I not then a father?—thought I.

Sit down when I bid you.

I sat down.

You look very sullen, Clary.

I hope not, madam.

If children would always be children—parents—and there she stopped.

She then went to her toilette, and looked in the glass, and gave half a sigh—The other half, as if she would not have sighed could she have helped it, she gently hemmed away.

I don't love to see the girl look so sullen.

Indeed, madam, I am not sullen.—And I arose, and turning from her, drew out my handkerchief; for the tears ran down my cheeks.

I thought, by the glass before me, I saw the *mother* in her softened eye cast toward me: but her words confirmed not the hope—for tenderness.

One of the most provoking things in the world is, to have people cry for what they can help!

I wish to heaven I could, madam!—and I sobbed.

Tears of penitence and sobs of perverseness are mighty well suited!—You may go up to your chamber. I shall talk with you by-and-by.

I courtesied with reverence.

Mock me not with outward gestures of respect. The heart, Clary, is what I want.

Indeed, madam, you have it. It is not so much mine as my mamma's!

Fine talking!—as somebody says. If words were to pass for duty, Clarissa Harlowe would be the most dutiful child breathing.

God bless that somebody!—be it whom it will, God bless that somebody!—And I courtesied, and pursuant to her last command, was going.

She seemed struck; but *was* to be angry with me.

So turning from me, she spoke with quickness, Whither now, Clary Harlowe?

You commanded me, madam, to go to my chamber.

I see you are very ready to go out of my presence.—Is your compliance the effect of sullenness, or obedience?—You are very ready to leave me.

I could hold no longer! but threw myself at her feet; O my dearest mamma! Let me know all I am to suffer! Let me know what I am to be!—I *will* bear it, if I *can* bear it: but your displeasure I cannot bear!

Leave me, leave me, Clary Harlowe!—No kneeling!—Limbs so supple; will so stubborn!—Rise I tell you.

I cannot rise! I will disobey my mamma, when she bids me leave her without being reconciled to me! No sullens, my mamma; no perverseness: but, worse than either: this is direct disobedience!—Yet tear not yourself from me! [wrapping my arms about her as I kneeled: she struggling to get from me; my face lifted up to hers, with eyes running over, that spoke not my heart if they were not all humility and reverence.] You must not, must not, tear yourself from me! [for still the dear lady struggled, and looked this way and that, in a sweet disorder, as if she knew not what to do.]—I will never rise, nor leave you, nor let you go, till you say you are not angry with me.

O thou ever moving child of my heart! [folding her dear arms about my neck, as mine embraced her knees] Why was this task—but leave me!—You have discomposed me beyond expression! Leave me, my dear!—I won't be angry with you—if I can help it—if you will be good.

I arose trembling, and hardly knowing what I did, or how I stood or walked, withdrew to my chamber. My Hannah followed me as soon as she heard me quit my mother's presence, and with salts and spring-water just kept me from fainting; and that was

as much as she could do. It was near two hours before I could so far recover myself as to take up my pen, to write to you how unhappily my hopes have ended.

My mother went down to breakfast. I was not fit to appear: but if I had been better, I suppose I should not have been sent for; since the permission for my attending her down, was given by my father (when in my chamber) only on condition that she found me *worthy of the name of daughter*. That, I doubt, I never shall be in *his* opinion, if he be not brought to change his mind as to this Mr. Solmes.

Saturday night.

I HAVE been down. I *am* to be unlucky in all I do, I think, be my intentions ever so good. I have made matters worse instead of better: as I shall now tell you.

I found my mother and sister together in my sister's parlor. My mother, I fear, by the glow in her fine face (and as the browner, sullener glow in my sister's confirmed) had been expressing herself with warmth against her *unhappier* child: perhaps giving such an account of what had passed, as should clear herself, and convince Bella, and through *her* my brother and uncles, of the sincere pains she had taken with me.

I entered like a dejected criminal, and besought the favor of a private audience. My mother's return, both looks and words, gave but too much reason for my above surmise.

You have, said she [looking at me with a sternness that never sits well on her sweet features] rather a *requesting* than a *conceding* countenance, Clarissa Harlowe. If I am mistaken, tell me so; and I will withdraw with you wherever you will.—Yet whether so, or not, you may say what you have to say before your sister.

I come down, madam, said I, to beg of you to forgive me for anything you have taken amiss in what passed above respecting your honored self; and that you will be pleased to use your endeavors to soften my papa's displeasure against me on his return.

My mother was angry enough; and asked me, to what purpose I came down, if I was still so untractable.

She had hardly spoken the words, when Shorey came in to tell her, that Mr. Solmes was in the hall, and desired admittance.

Ugly creature! What, at the close of day, quite dark, brought him hither?—But, on second thoughts, I believe it was contrived, that he should be here at supper, to know the result of the conference between my mother and me, and that my father, on his return, might find us together.

I was hurrying away, but my mother commanded me (since I had come down only, as she said, to mock her) not to stir: and at the same time see if I could behave so to Mr. Solmes, as might

encourage her to make the favorable report to my father which I had besought her to make.

My sister triumphed. I was vexed to be so caught, and to have such an angry and cutting rebuke given me, with an aspect more like the taunting sister than the indulgent mother, if I may presume to say so. for she herself seemed to enjoy the surprise upon me.

The man stalked in. His usual walk is by pauses, as if (from the same vacuity of thought which made Dryden's clown whistle) he was telling his steps: and first paid his clumsy respects to my mother; then to my sister; next to me, as if I were already his wife and therefore to be last in his notice; and sitting down by me, told us in general what weather it was. Very cold he made it; but I was warm enough. Then addressing himself to me; And how do you you find it, miss? was his question; and would have taken my hand.

I withdrew it. I believe with disdain enough. My mother frowned. My sister bit her lip.

I could not contain myself: I was never so bold in my life; for I went on with my plea, as if Mr. Solmes had not been there.

My mother colored, and looked at him, at my sister, and at me. My sister's eyes were opener and bigger than I ever saw them before.

The man understood me. He hemmed, and removed from one chair to another.

I went on, supplicating for my mother's favorable report Nothing but invincible dislike, said I—

What would the girl be at, interrupted my mother? Why Clary! Is this a subject!—Is this!—Is this!—Is this a time—And again she looked upon Mr. Solmes.

I beg pardon, madam, said I. But my papa will soon return. And since I am not permitted to withdraw, it is not necessary, I humbly presume, that Mr. Solmes's presence should deprive me of this opportunity to implore your favorable report; and at the same time, if he still visit on my account [looking at him] to convince him, that it cannot possibly be to any purpose—

Is the girl mad? said my mother interrupting me.

My sister, with the affectation of a whisper to my mother—This is—This is *spite*, madam, [very *spitefully* she spoke the word] because you commanded her to stay.

I only looked at her, and turning to my mother, Permit me madam, said I, to repeat my request. I have no brother, no sister! If I lose my mamma's favor, I am lost for ever!

Mr. Solmes removed to his first seat, and fell to gnawing the head of his hazel; a carved head, almost as ugly as his own—I did not think the man was so *sensible*.

My sister rose, with a face all over scarlet ; and stepping to the table, where lay a fan, she took it up, and, although Mr. Solmes had observed that the weather was cold, fanned herself very violently.

My mother came to me, and angrily taking my hand, led me out of that parlor into my own ; which, you know, is next to it—

* * *

My father is come home, and my brother with him. Late as it is, they are all shut up together. Not a door opens ; nor a soul stirs. Hannah, as she moves up and down, is shunned as a person infected.

* * *

The angry assembly is broken up. My two uncles and my aunt Hervey are sent for, it seems, to be here in the morning to breakfast. I shall then, I suppose, know my doom. 'Tis past eleven, and I am ordered not to go to bed.

Twelve o'clock.

This moment the keys of every thing are taken from me. It was proposed to send for me down : but my father said, he could not bear to look upon me.—Strange alteration in a few weeks !—Shorey was the messenger. The tears stood in her eyes when she delivered her message.

You, my dear, are happy—may you always be so—and then I can never be wholly miserable. Adieu, my beloved friend !

CL. HARLOWE.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.

Sunday morning, March 5.

—HANNAH has just brought me, from the private place in the garden-wall,* a letter from Mr. Lovelace, deposited last night, signed also by Lord M.

Really, my dear, were you to see his letter, you would think I had given him great encouragement, and that I am in direct treaty with him ; or that he is sure that my friends will drive me into a foreign protection ; for he has the boldness to offer, in my lord's name, an asylum to me, should I be tyrannically treated in Solmes's behalf.

I suppose it is the way of this sex to endeavour to entangle the thoughtless of ours by bold supposals and offers, in hopes that we shall be too complaisant or bashful to quarrel with them

* Agreed upon for depositing letters.—ED.

and, if not checked, to reckon upon our silence, as assents voluntarily given, or concessions made in their favour.

There are other particulars in this letter which I ought to mention to you: but I will take an opportunity to send you the letter itself, or a copy of it.

For my own part I am very uneasy to think how I have been *drawn* on one hand, and *driven* on the other, into a clandestine, in short, into a mere lover-like correspondence, which my heart condemns.

It is easy to see, if I do not break it off, that Mr. Lovelace's advantages, by reason of my unhappy situation, will every day increase, and I shall be more and more entangled. Yet if I do put an end to it, without making it a condition of being freed from Mr. Solmes's addresses—may I, my dear, is it *best* to continue it a little longer, in hopes to extricate myself out of the other difficulty by giving up all thoughts of Mr. Lovelace?—*Whose* advice can I now ask but yours?

All my relations are met. They are at breakfast together. Mr. Solmes is expected. I am excessively uneasy. I must lay down my pen.

* * *

They are all going to church together. Grievously disordered they appear to be, as Hannah tells me. She believes something is resolved upon.

Sunday noon.

What a cruel thing is suspense!—I will ask leave to go to church this afternoon, I expect to be denied: but if I do not ask, they may allege, that my not going is owing to myself.

* * *

I desired to speak with Shorey. Shorey came. I directed her to carry to my mother my request for permission to go to church this afternoon. What think you was the return? Tell her that she must direct herself to her brother for any favour she has to ask.—So, my dear, I am to be delivered up to my brother!

I was resolved, however, to ask of him this favour. Accordingly, when they sent me up my solitary dinner, I gave the messenger a billet, in which I made it my humble request through him to my father, to be permitted to go to church this afternoon.

This was the contemptuous answer: "Tell her that her request will be taken into consideration *to-morrow*."—My request to go to church *to-day* to be taken into consideration *to-morrow*!

Patience will be the fittest return I can make to such an insult. But this method will not do with me; indeed it will not and yet it is but the beginning, I suppose, of what I am to expect from my brother, now I am delivered up to him.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.

Monday morning, March 6.

THEY are resolved to break my heart. My poor Hannah is discharged—disgracefully discharged!—Thus it was.

Within half an hour after I had sent the poor girl down for my breakfast, that bold creature Betty Barnes, my sister's confidant and servant (if a favourite maid and confidant can be deemed a *servant*) came up.

What, miss, will you please to have for breakfast?

I was surprised. What will I have for breakfast, Betty!—How!—What! How comes it!—Then I named Hannah. I could not tell what to say.

Why, miss, the short and the long is this: your papa and mamma think Hannah has staid long enough in the house to do mischief; and so she is ordered to *troop* [that was the confident creature's word]; and I am directed to wait upon you in her stead.

I burst into tears. I have no service for you, Betty Barnes; none at all. But where is Hannah? Cannot I speak with the poor girl? I owe her half a year's wages? May I not see the honest creature, and pay her her wages? I may never see her again perhaps: for they are resolved to break my heart.

And they think you are resolved to break theirs: so tit for tat, miss.

Impertinent I called her; and asked her, if it were upon such confident terms that her service was to begin.

I was so very earnest to see the poor maid, that (to *oblige* me, as she said) she went down with my request.

The worthy creature was as earnest to see me; and the favour was granted in presence of Shorey and Betty.

I thanked her when she came up, for her past service to me.

Her heart was ready to break. And she began to vindicate her fidelity and love; and disclaimed any mischief she had ever made.

I told her, that those who occasioned her being turned out of my service, made no question of her integrity: that her dismissal was intended for an indignity to me. That I was very sorry to be obliged to part with her, and hoped she would meet with as good a service.

Never, never, wringing her hands, should she meet with a mistress she loved so well. And the poor creature ran on in my praises, and in professions of love to me.

I gave her a little linen, some laces, and other odd things; and instead of four pounds which were due to her, ten guineas: and said if ever I were again allowed to be my own mistress, I would think of her in the first place.

Monday, near 12 o'clock.

THE enclosed letter was just now delivered to me. My brother has carried all his points.

I send you also the copy of my answer. No more at this time can I write!—

Monday, Mar. 6.

BY command of your father and mother I write expressly to forbid you to come into their presence, or into the garden when *they* are there: nor when they are *not* there, but with Betty Farnes to attend you; except by particular license or command.

On their blessings you are forbidden likewise to correspond with the vile Lovelace; as it is well known you did by means of your sly Hannah. Whence her sudden discharge. As was fit.

Neither are you to correspond with Miss Howe; who has given herself high airs of late; and might possibly help on your correspondence with that detested libertine. Nor in short, with any body without leave.

You are not to enter into the presence of either of your uncles, without their leave first obtained. It is in *mercy* to you, after such a behaviour to your mother, that your father refuses to see you.

You are not to be seen in any apartment of the house you so lately governed as you pleased, unless you are commanded down.

In short, you are strictly to confine yourself to your chamber, except now and then, in Betty Barnes' sight (as aforesaid) you take a morning or evening turn in the garden: and then you are to go directly, and without stopping at any apartment in the way, up and down the back stairs, that the sight of so perverse a young creature may not add to the pain you have given everybody.

Betty Barnes has orders to obey you in all points consistent with her duty to those to whom *you* owe it as well as *she*.

JA. HARLOWE.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.

Tuesday, March 7.

BY my last deposit, you will see how I am driven and what a poor prisoner I am.—No regard had to my reputation. The whole matter is now before you. Can *such* measures be supposed to soften?—But surely they can only mean to try to frighten me into my brother's views!—All my hope is, to be able to weather this point till my cousin Morden comes from Florence; and he is soon expected: yet if they are determined upon a short day I doubt he will not be here time enough to save me.

After this letter, you will believe that I could have very little hopes that an application directly to my father would stand me in any stead ! but I thought it became me to write, were it but to acquit myself *to myself*, that I have left nothing unattempted that has the least likelihood to restore me to his favour. Accordingly I wrote to the following effect :

“ I presume not, I say, to argue with my papa ; I only beg his mercy and indulgence in this *one* point, on which depends my present and perhaps my *future* happiness ; and beseech him not to reprobate his child for aversion which it is not in her power to conquer. I beg, that, I may not be sacrificed to projects, and remote contingencies. I complain of the disgraces I suffer in this banishment from his presence, and being confined to my chamber. In everything, but this *one* point, I promise implicit duty and resignation to his will. I repeat my offer of a single life ; and appeal to him, whether I have ever given him cause to doubt my word. I beg to be admitted to his and to my mamma’s presence, and that my conduct may be under their own eye : and this with the more earnestness, as I have too much reason to believe that snares are laid for me ; and tauntings and revilings used on purpose to make a handle of my words against me, when I am not permitted to speak in my own defence. I conclude with hoping, that my brother’s instigations may not rob an unhappy child of her father.”

This is the answer, sent without superscription, and unsealed, although by Betty Barnes, who delivered it with an air, as if she knew the contents.

Wednesday.

I write, perverse girl ; but with all the indignation that your disobedience deserves. To desire to be forgiven a fault you own, and yet resolve to persevere in, is a boldness, no more to be equalled, than passed over. It is *my* authority you defy. Your reflections upon a brother, that is an honour to us all, deserve my utmost resentment. I see how light all relationship sits upon *you*. The *cause* I guess at, too. I cannot bear the reflections that naturally arise from this consideration. Your behaviour to your too indulgent and too fond mother—But, I have no patience—Continue banished from my presence, undutiful as you are, till you know how to conform to my will. Ungrateful creature ! Your letter but upbraids me for my past indulgence. Write no more to me, till you can distinguish better ; and till you are convinced of your duty to

A justly incensed father.

This angry letter was accompanied with one from my mother

unsealed, and unsuperscribed also. Those who take so much pains to confederate every one against me, I make no doubt obliged her to bear her testimony against the poor girl.

My mother's letter being a repetition of some of the severe things that passed between herself and me, of which I have already informed you, I shall not need to give you the contents :

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.

Thursday morn. March 9.

I HAVE another letter from Mr. Lovelace, although I had not answered his former.

This man, somehow or other, knows every thing that passes in our family. My confinement ; Hannah's dismissal ; and more of the resentments and resolutions of my father, uncles, and brother, than I can possibly know, and almost as soon as the things happen, which he tells me of. He cannot come at these intelligences fairly.

He is excessively uneasy upon what he hears ; and his expressions, both of love to me, and resentment to them, are very fervent. He solicits me "to engage my honour to him, never to have Mr. Solmes."

I think I may fairly promise him that I will not.

I have promised to lay before you all his letters, and my answers : I repeat that promise : and am the less solicitous for that reason, to amplify upon the contents of either. But I cannot too often express my vexation, to be driven to such straits and difficulties, here at home, as oblige me to answer letters (from a man I had not absolutely intended to encourage, and to whom I had really great objections) filled as *his* are with such warm protestations, and written to me with a spirit of expectation.

For, my dear, you never knew so bold a supposer. As commentators find beauties in an author, to which the author perhaps was a stranger ; so he sometimes compliments me in high strains or gratitude for favours, and for a consideration, which I never designed him ; insomuch that I am frequently under a necessity of explaining away the attributed goodness to him, which if I shewed, I should have the less opinion of myself.

In short, my dear, like a restiff horse (as I have heard described by sportsmen) he pains one's hands, and half disjoins one's arms, to rein him in. And, when you see his letters, you must form no judgment upon them till you have read my answers. If you do, you will indeed think you have cause to attribute *self-deceit*, and *throbs*, and *glows* to your friend—And yet, at other times, the contradictory creature complains, that I shew him as

little favour, and my friends as much inveteracy, as if in the rencounter betwixt my brother and him he had been the aggressor, and as if the catastrophe had been as fatal as it might have been.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

Monday, March 13.

IN vain dost thou* and thy compeers press me to go to town, while I am in such an uncertainty as I am in at present with this proud beauty. All the ground I have hitherto gained with her, is entirely owing to her concern for the safety of people whom I have reason to hate.

But is it not a confounded thing to be in love with one, who is the daughter, the sister, the niece of a family I must eternally despise? And, the devil of it, that love increasing with her—what shall I call it?—'Tis not scorn:—'tis not pride;—'tis not the insolence of an adored beauty:—but 'tis to *virtue*, it seems, that my difficulties are owing; and I pay for not being a sly sinner, an hypocrite; for being regardless of my reputation; for permitting slander to open its mouth against me. But is it necessary for such a one as I, who have been used to carry all before me, upon my own terms—I, who never inspired a fear, that had not a discernibly predominant mixture of love in it; to be an hypocrite?—Well says the poet:

He who seems virtuous does but act a part;
And shews not his own nature, but his art.

Well, but it seems I must *practise* for this art if I would succeed with this truly admirable creature; but why *practise* for it?—Cannot I *indeed* reform?—I have but *one* vice;—have I Jack?—Thou knowest my heart, if any man living does. As far as I know it myself, thou knowest it. But 'tis a cursed deceiver; for it has many and many a time imposed upon its master—*Master*, did I say? That am I not now; nor have I been from the moment I beheld this angel of a woman. Prepared indeed as I was by her character before I saw her: for what a mind must that be, which though not virtuous itself, admires not virtue in another?—My visit to Arabella, owing to a mistake of the sisters, into which, as thou hast heard me say, I was led by the blundering uncle; who was to introduce *me* (but lately come from abroad) to the *divinity*, as I thought; but instead of her, carried me to a

* These gentlemen affected what they called the Roman style (to wit, the *thou* and the *theu*) in their letters: and it was an agreed rule with them, to take in good part whatever freedoms they treated each other with, if the passages were written in that style.

mere mortal. And much difficulty had I, so fond and so forward my lady! to get off without forfeiting all with a family that I intended should give me a goddess.

I have boasted that I was once in love before:—and indeed I thought I was. It was in my early manhood—with that quality-jilt, whose infidelity I have vowed to revenge upon as many of the sex as shall come into my power. I believe, in different climes, I have already sacrificed an hecatomb to my Nemesis, in pursuance of this vow. But upon recollecting what I was *then*, and comparing it with what I find myself *now*, I cannot say that I was ever in love before.

But now am I *indeed* in love. I can think of nothing, of nobody, but the divine Clarissa Harlowe—*Harlowe*?—How that hated word sticks in my throat—But I shall give for it the name of love.*

Clarissa! O there's music in the name,
That, soft'ning me to infant tenderness,
Makes my heart spring like the first leaps of life!

But couldst thou have believed that I, who think it possible for me to favour as much as I can be favoured; that I, who for this charming creature think of foregoing the *life of honour*, for the *life of shackles*; could adopt those over tender lines of Otway?

I check myself, and leaving the three first lines of the following of Dryden to the family of the whiners, find the workings of the passion in my stormy soul better expressed by the three last

Love various minds does variously inspire:
He stirs in gentle natures gentle fires;
Like that of incense on the altar laid,
But raging flames tempestuous souls invade:
A fire which every windy passion blows;
With pride it mounts, and with revenge it glows

And with revenge it *shall* glow!—For, dost thou think, that if it were not from the hope, that this stupid family are all combined to do my work for me, I would bear their insults?—Is it possible to imagine, that I would be braved as I am braved, threatened as I am threatened, by those who are afraid to see me; and by this brutal brother too, to whom I gave a life [a life, indeed, not worth my taking!]; had I not a greater pride in knowing, that by means of his very spy upon me, I am playing him off as I please; cooling or inflaming his violent passions as may best suit my purposes; permitting so much to be revealed of my life and actions, and intentions, as may give him such a confidence in his double-faced agent, as shall enable me to dance his employer upon my own wires?

* Lovelace.

This it is that makes my pride mount above my resentment By this engine, whose springs I am continually oiling, I play them all off. The busy old tarpaulin uncle I make but my ambassador to queen Annabella Howe, to engage her (for example sake to her princessly daughter) to join in their cause, and to assert an authority they are resolved, right or wrong, (or I could do nothing) to maintain.

And what my motive, dost thou ask? No less than this, that my beloved shall find no protection out of my family: for, if I know *hers*, fly she must, or have the man she hates. This, therefore, if I take my measures right, and my familiar fail me not, will secure her mine in spite of them all; in spite of her own inflexible heart: mine, without condition; without reformation promises; without the necessity of a siege of years, perhaps; and to be even then, after wearing the guise of merit-doubting hypocrisy, at an uncertainty upon a probation unapproved of—Then shall I have all the rascals and rascalleesses of the family come creeping to me: I prescribing to me; and bringing that sordidly imperious brother to kneel at the footstool of my throne.

All my fear arises from the little hold I have in the heart of this charming frost-piece: such a constant glow upon her lovely features: eyes so sparkling: limbs so divinely turned: health so florid: youth so blooming: air so animated—To have an heart so impenetrable: and *I*, the hitherto successful Lovelace, the addresser—How can it be? Yet there are people, and I have talked with some of them, who remember that she was *born*. Her nurse Norton boasts of her maternal offices in her earliest infancy; and in her education *gradatim*. So there is full proof, that she came not from above all at once an angel! how then can she be so impenetrable?

That her indifference to me is not owing to the superior liking she has for *any* other, is what rivets my chains: but take care fair-one: take care, O thou most exalted of female minds, and loveliest of persons, how thou debasest thyself by encouraging such a competition as thy sordid relations have set on foot in mere malice to me!—Thou wilt say I rave. And so I do:

Perdition catch my soul, but I do love her,

Else, could I bear the perpetual revilings of her implacable family?—*Else*, could I basely creep about—not her proud father's house—but his paddock—and garden-walls?—Yet (a quarter of a mile distance between us) not hoping to behold the least glimpse of her shadow?—*Else*, should I think myself repaid, amply repaid, if the fourth, fifth, or sixth midnight stroll, through unfrequented paths, and over briery enclosures, affords me a few

cold lines : the even *expected* purport only to let me know, that she values the most worthless family, more than she values me; and that she would not write at all, but to induce me to bear insults, which *un-man* me to bear? My lodging in the intermediate way, at a wretched ale-house; disguised like an inmate of it : accommodations equally vile, as those I met with in my Westphalian journey. 'Tis well, that the necessity for all this arises not from scorn and tyranny ! but is first imposed upon herself.

But was ever hero in romance (fighting with giants and dragons excepted) called upon to harder trials ?—Fortune and family, and reversionary grandeur on my side ! such a wretched fellow my competitor ?—Must I not be deplorably in love, that can go through these difficulties, encounter these contempts ?—By my soul, I am half-ashamed of myself : I, who am perjured too, by priority of obligation, if I am faithful to any woman in the world !

Thou art curious to know, if I have not started a new game? If it be possible for so universal a lover to be confined so long to one object? Thou knowest *nothing* of this charming creature, that thou canst put such questions to me; or thinkest thou knowest me better than thou dost. All that's excellent in her sex is this lady !—Until by matrimonial or equal intimacies, I have found her *less than angel*, it is impossible to think of any other. Then there are so many stimulatives to such a spirit as mine in this affair, *besides* love : such a field of stratagem and contrivance, which thou knowest to be the delight of my heart. Then the rewarding end of all !—To carry off such a girl as this, in spite of all her watchful and implacable friends; and in spite of a prudence and reserve that I never met with in any of the sex !—What a triumph !—What a triumph over the whole sex !—And then such a revenge to gratify; which is only at present politically reined in, eventually to break forth with greater fury—Is it possible, thinkest thou, that there can be room for a thought that is not *of* her, and devoted *to* her?

* * *

By the advices I have this moment received, I have reason to think, that I shall have occasion for thee here. Hold thyself in readiness to come down upon the first summons.

Let Belton, and Mowbray, and Tourville, likewise prepare themselves. I have a great mind to contrive a method to send James Harlowe to travel for improvement. Never was there a booby-squire that more wanted it. *Contrive* it, did I say? I have *already* contrived it; could I but put it in execution without being suspected to have a hand in it. This I am resolved upon; if I have not his *sister*, I will have him.

LOVELACE.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.

Thursday, March 16.

HAVING met with such bad success in my application to my relations,* I have taken a step that will surprise you. It is no other than writing a letter to Mr. Solmes himself. I sent it; and have his answer. He had certainly help in it. For I have seen a letter of his; as indifferently worded, as poorly spelt. Yet the superscription is of *his* dictating, I dare say; for he is a formal wretch. With these, I shall inclose one from my brother to me, on occasion of mine to Mr. Solmes. I did think that it was possible to discourage the man from proceeding; and if I could have done that, it would have answered all my wishes. It was worth the trial. But you'll see nothing will do. My brother has taken his measures too securely.

To Roger Solmes, Esq.

Wednesday, March 15.

SIR,

YOU will wonder to receive a letter from me; and more still at the uncommon subject of it: But the necessity of the case will justify me, at least in my own apprehension; and I shall therefore make no other apology for it.

When you first came acquainted with our family, you found the writer of this one of the happiest creatures in the world: beloved by the best and most indulgent of parents; and rejoicing in the kind favor of two affectionate uncles, and in the esteem of every one.

But how is this happy scene now changed!—You were pleased to cast a favorable eye upon me. You addressed yourself to my friends: your proposals were approved of by them—approved of without consulting me; as if my choice and happiness were of the least signification. Those who had a right to all reasonable obedience from me, insisted upon it without reserve. I had not the felicity to think as they did: almost the first time my sentiments differed from theirs. I besought them to indulge me in a point so important to my future happiness: but, alas, in vain! And then (for I thought it was but honest) I told *you* my mind; and even that my affections were engaged. But, to my mortification and surprise, you persisted, and still persist.

If I am capable of judging, our tempers and inclinations are

* [She had written appealing letters to her brother, sister, and both her uncles, and received abusive replies; but as they are not essential to the narrative they are omitted. In them she offers to give up her estate and pledge herself to the "single life" if they will deliver her from the addresses of Mr. Solmes.—Ed.]

vastly different. Any other of my sex will make you happier than I can. The treatment I meet with, and the obstinacy, as it is called, with which I support myself under it, ought to convince you of this; were I *not* able to give so good a reason for this my supposed perverseness, as that I cannot consent to marry a man whom I cannot value.

But if, sir, you have not so much generosity in your value for me, as to desist for *my own* sake, let me conjure you, by the regard due to *yourself*, and to your own future happiness, to discontinue your suit, and place your affections on a worthier object: for why should you make *me* miserable and *yourself* not happy? By this means you will do all that is now in your power to restore to me the affection of my friends; and, if that can be, it will leave me in as happy a state as you found me in. You need only to say, that you see there are no HOPES, and you will perhaps complaisantly call it, of succeeding with me [and indeed, sir, there cannot be a greater truth]; and that you will therefore no more think of me; and turn your thoughts another way.

Your compliance with this request will lay me under the highest obligation to your generosity, and make me ever

Your well-wisher, and humble servant,

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

*To Miss Clarissa Harlowe,
These most humbly present.*

DEAREST MISS,

Your letter has had a very contrary effect upon me, to what you seem to have expected from it. It has doubly convinced me of the excellency of your mind, and of the honour of your disposition. Call it *selfish*, or what you please, I must persist in my suit; and happy shall I be, if by patience and perseverance, and a steady and unalterable devoir, I may at last overcome the difficulty laid in my way.

As your good parents, your uncles and other friends, are absolutely determined you shall never have Mr. Lovelace, if they can help it; and as I presume no other person is in the way; I will contentedly wait the issue of this matter. And forgive me, dearest miss; but a person should sooner persuade me to give up to him my estate, as an instance of my generosity, because *he* could not be happy without it, than I would a much more valuable treasure, to promote the felicity of another, and make his way easier to circumvent myself.

Pardon me, dear miss; but I must persevere, though I am sorry you suffer on my account, as you are pleased to think; for I never before saw the woman I could love: and while there is any

hope, and that you remain undisposed of to some happier man, I must and will be

Your faithful and obsequious admirer

March 16.

ROGER SOLMES.

Mr. James Harlowe to Miss Cl. Harlowe.

March 16.

WHAT a fine whim you took into your head, to write a letter to Mr. Solmes, to persuade him to give up his pretensions to you!—Of *all* the pretty romantic flights you have delighted in, this was certainly one of the most extraordinary. But to say nothing of what fires us all with indignation against you (your owning your prepossession in a villain's favour; and your impertinence to me, and your sister, and your uncles; one of which has given it you home, child); how can you lay at Mr. Solmes's door the usage you so bitterly complain of?—You know, little fool as you are, that it is your fondness for Lovelace that has brought upon you all these things; and which would have happened whether Mr. Solmes had honoured you with his addresses or not.

As you must needs know this to be true, consider pretty witty miss, if your fond love-sick heart can let you consider, what a fine figure all your expostulations with us, and charges upon Mr. Solmes, make!—With what propriety do you *demand* of *him* to restore to you your former happiness (as you call it, and *merely* call it; for if you thought our favour so, you would restore it to yourself), since it is in your own power to do so? therefore, Miss Pert, none of your pathetics, except in the right place. Depend upon it, whether you have Mr. Solmes, or not, you shall never have your heart's delight, the vile rake Lovelace, if our parents, if our uncles, if I can hinder it: no! you fallen angel, you shall not give your father and mother such a *son*, nor me such a *brother*, in giving yourself that profligate wretch for a *husband*. And so set your heart at rest, and lay aside all thoughts of him, if ever you expect forgiveness, reconciliation, or a kind opinion, from any of your family but especially from him, who, at present, styles himself

Your brother,

JAMES HARLOWE.

P. S. I know your knack at letter-writing. If you send me an answer to this, I will return it unopened; for I will not argue with your perverseness in so plain a case.—Only once for all, I was willing to put you right as to Mr. Solmes; whom I think to blame to trouble his head about you.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

I HAVE found out by my *watchful spy* almost as many of my charmer's motions, as of those of the rest of her relations. It delights me to think how the rascal is caressed by the uncles and nephew; and let into *their* secrets; yet proceeds all the time by *my* line of direction. I have charged him, however, on forfeiture of his present weekly stipend, and my future favour, to take care, that neither my beloved, nor any of the family, suspect him; I have told him that he may indeed watch her egresses and regresses; but that only to keep off other servants from her paths, yet not to be seen by her himself.

The dear creature has tempted him, he told *them*, with a bribe [*which she never offered*] to convey a letter [*which she never wrote*] to Miss Howe; *he believes*, with one inclosed (*perhaps to me*); but he declined it: and he begged they would take no notice of it to *her*. This brought him a stingy shilling; great applause; and an injunction followed it to all the servants, for the strictest lookout, lest she should contrive some way to send it—And, about an hour after, an order was given him to throw himself in her way; and (expressing his concern for denying her request) to tender his service to her, and to bring them her letter: which it will be *proper for him to report* that she has refused to give him.

Now seest thou not, how many good ends this contrivance answers?

In the first place, the lady is secured by it, against her own knowledge, in the liberty allowed her of taking her private walks in the garden; for *this attempt* has confirmed them in their belief, that now they have turned off her maid, she has no way to send a letter out of the house: if she had, she would not have run the risque of tempting a fellow who had not been in her secret—So that she can prosecute unsuspectedly her correspondence with me, and Miss Howe.

In the next place, it will perhaps afford me an opportunity of a private interview with her, which I am meditating, let her take it as she will; having found out by my *spy* (who can keep off every body else) that she goes every morning and evening to a wood-house remote from the dwelling-house, under pretence of visiting and feeding a set of bantam-poultry, which were produced from a breed that was her grandfather's, and of which for that reason she is very fond; as also of some other curious fowls brought from the same place. I have an account of all her motions here. And as she has owned to me in one of her letters that she corresponds privately with Miss Howe, I presume it is by this way.

The interview I am meditating, will produce her consent, I hope, to other favours of the like kind: for, should she not choose

the place in which I am expecting to see her, I can attend her any where in the rambling, Dutch-taste garden, whenever she will permit me that honour; for my implement, *hight Joseph Leman*, has procured me the opportunity of getting two keys made to the garden door (one of which I have given him, for reasons good); which door opens to the haunted coppice, as tradition has made the servants think it; a man having been found hanging in it about twenty years ago: and Joseph, upon proper notice, will leave it unbolted.

I will throw myself into my charmer's presence. I have twice already attempted it in vain. I shall then see what I may depend upon from her favour. If I thought I had no prospect of that, I should be tempted to carry her off—That would be a rape worthy of a Jupiter!

But all gentle shall be my movements. all respectful, even to reverence, my address to her—Her hand shall be the only witness to the pressure of my lip—my trembling lip: I *know* it will tremble, if I do not *bid* it tremble. As soft my sighs, as the sighs of my gentle rose-bud. By *my* humility will I invite *her* confidence: the loneliness of the place shall give me no advantage: to dissipate her fears, and engage her reliance upon my honour for the future, shall be my whole endeavour: but little will I complain of, not at all will I threaten, those who are continually threatening me: but yet with a view to act the part of Dryden's Lion; to secure my love, or to let loose my vengeance upon my hunters.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe, to Miss Howe.

Saturday, March 18.

I HAVE been frighted out of my wits—Still am in a manner out of breath—Thus occasioned—I went down, under the usual pretence, in hopes to find something from you. Concerned at my disappointment, I was returning from the woodhouse, when I heard a rustling as of somebody behind a stack of wood. I was extremely surprised: but still more, to behold a man coming from behind the furthestmost stack. O, thought I, at that moment, the sin of a prohibited correspondence!

In the same point of time that I saw him, he besought me not to be frightened: and still nearer approaching me, threw open a horseman's coat: and who should it be but Mr. Lovelace!—I could not scream out (yet attempted to scream, the moment I saw a man; and again, when I saw who it was); for I had no voice: and had I not caught hold of a prop which supported the old roof, I should have sunk.

I had hitherto, as you know, kept him at a distance: and now

✓ as I recovered myself, judge of my first emotions, when I recollected his character from every mouth of my family; his enterprising temper; and found myself alone with him, in a place so near a bye-lane, and so remote from the house.

But his respectful behaviour soon dissipated these fears, and gave me others; lest we should be seen together, and information of it given to my brother: the consequences of which, I could readily think would be, if not further mischief, an imputed assignation, a stricter confinement, a forfeited correspondence with you, my beloved friend, and a pretence for the most violent compulsion: and neither the one set of reflections, nor the other, acquitted him to me for his bold intrusion.

As soon therefore as I could speak, I expressed with the greatest warmth my displeasure; and told him, that he cared not how much he exposed me to the resentment of all my friends, provided he could gratify his own impetuous humor. I then commanded him to leave the place that moment; and was hurrying from him, when he threw himself in the way at my feet, beseeching my stay for one moment; declaring, that he suffered himself to be guilty of this rashness, as I thought it, to avoid one much greater;—for, in short, he could not bear the hourly insults he received from my family, with the thoughts of having so little interest in my favour, that he could not promise himself that his patience and forbearance would be attended with any other issue than to lose me for ever, and be triumphed over and insulted upon it.

I was very uneasy to be gone; and the more as the night came on apace. But there was no getting from him, till I had heard a great deal more of what he had to say.

As he hoped, that I would one day make him the happiest man in the world, he assured me, that he had so much regard for my fame, that he would be as far from advising any step that was likely to cast a shade upon my reputation (although that step was to be ever so much in his own favour), as I would be to follow such advice. But since I was not to be permitted to live single, he would submit it to my consideration, whether I had any way but *one* to avoid the intended violence to my inclinations.

He appealed to me, whether ever I knew my father recede from any resolution he had once fixed; especially, if he thought either his prerogative, or his authority, concerned in the question. His acquaintance with our family, he said, enabled him to give several instances (but they would be too grating to me) of an arbitrariness that had few examples, even in the family of princes: an arbitrariness, which the most excellent of women, my mother, too severely experienced.

He was proceeding, as I thought, with reflections of this sort; and I angrily told him, I would not permit my father to be reflected

upon; adding, that his severity to me, however unmerited, was not a warrant for me to dispense with my duty to him.

He then pressed me to receive a letter of offered protection from Lady Betty. He said, that people of birth stood a little too much upon punctilio; as people of virtue also did. Else, Lady Betty would write to *me*: but she would be willing to be first apprised, that her offer would be well received—as it would have the appearance of being made against the liking of one part of my family; and which nothing would induce her to make, but the degree of unworthy persecution which I actually labored under, and had reason further to apprehend.

I told him, that however greatly I thought myself obliged to Lady Betty Lawrence, if this offer came from herself; yet it was easy to see to what it led. It might look like vanity in me perhaps to say, that this urgency in him on this occasion, wore the face of art, in order to engage me into measures from which I might not easily extricate myself. I said, that I should not be affected by the splendour of even a royal title. *Goodness*, I thought, was *greatness*: that the excellent characters of the ladies of his family weighed more with me, than the consideration that they were sisters to Lord M. and daughters of an earl: that he would not have found encouragement from me, had my friends been *consenting* to his address, if he had only a *mere* relative merit to those ladies; since in that case, the very reasons that made me admire *them*, would have been so many objections to their *kinsman*.

I said, I would try every method, that either my duty or my influence upon any of them should suggest, before I would put myself into any other protection: and if nothing else would do, would resign the envied estate; and that I dared to say *would*.

He was contented, he said, to abide that issue. He should be far from wishing me to embrace any other protection, but, as he had frequently said, in the last necessity. But, dearest creature, catching my hand with ardour, and pressing it to his lips, if the yielding up that estate will do—resign it;—and be mine—and I will corroborate, with all my soul, your resignation!

This was not ungenerously said: but what will not these men say to obtain belief, and a power over one? I made many efforts to go; and now it was so dark, that I began to have great apprehensions. I cannot say from his behaviour: indeed he has a good deal raised himself in my opinion by the personal respect, even to reverence, which he paid me during the whole conference; for although he flamed out once, upon a supposition that Solmes might succeed, it was upon a supposition that would excuse passion, if any thing could, you know, in a man pretending to love with fervour: although it was so levelled, that I could not avoid resenting it.

He recommended himself to my favour at parting, with great earnestness, yet with so great submission ; not offering to condition any thing with me ; although he hinted his wishes for another meeting : which I forbade him ever attempting again in the same place.—And I will own to you, from whom I should be really blameable to conceal any thing, that his arguments (drawn from the disgraceful treatment I meet with) of what I *am* to expect, make me begin to apprehend, that I shall be under an obligation to be either the one man's or the other's—and if so, I fancy, I shall not incur your blame, were I to say, *which* of the two it must be. You have said, which it must *not* be. But, O my dear, the single life is by far the most eligible to me : *indeed* it is. And I hope yet to be permitted to make that option.

I got back without observation : but the apprehension that I should not, gave me great uneasiness ; and made me begin my letter in a greater flutter than he gave me cause to be in, except at the first seeing him ; for then indeed my spirits failed me ; and it was a particular felicity, that in such a fright, and alone with him, I fainted not away.

Your affectionate and faithful friend and servant,

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.

Tuesday, March 21.

How willingly would my dear mother show kindness to me were she permitted. None of this persecution should I labour under, I am sure, if that regard were paid to her prudence and fine understanding, which they so well deserve. Whether owing to her, or to my aunt, or to both, that a new trial was to be made upon me, I cannot tell ; but this morning her Shorey delivered 'nto my hand the following condescending letter.

MY DEAR GIRL,

For so I must still call you : since *dear* you may be to me in every sense of the word.

Your father permits me to tell you, that if you now at last comply with his expectations, all past disobligations shall be buried in oblivion, as if they had never been : but withal, that this is the last time that grace will be offered you.

I hinted to you, you must remember, that patterns of the richest silks were sent for. They are come. And as they are come, your father, to show how much he is determined, will have me send them up to you. I could have wished they might not have accompanied this letter—But there is no great matter in

that. I must tell you, that your delicacy is not to be quite so much regarded as I had once thought it deserved to be.

These are the newest as well as the richest that we could procure; answerable to our station in the world; answerable to the fortune additional to your grandfather's estate, designed you; and to the noble settlements agreed upon.

Your father intends you six suits (three of them dress-suits) at his own expense. You have an entire new suit; and one besides, which I think you never wore but twice. As the new suit is rich, if you choose to make that one of the six, your father will present you with an hundred guineas in lieu.

Mr. Solmes intends to present you with a set of jewels. As you have your grandmother's and your own, if you choose to have the former new set, and to make them serve, his present will be made in money: a very round sum—which will be given in full property to yourself; besides a fine annual allowance for pin-money, as it is called. So that your objection against the spirit of a man you think worse of than it deserves, will have no weight; but you will be more independent than a wife of less discretion than we attribute to you, perhaps *ought* to be. You know full well that I, who first and last brought a still larger fortune into the family than you will carry to Mr. Solmes, had not a provision made me of near this that we have made for you—Where people marry to their liking, terms are the least things stood upon—Yet should I be sorry if you cannot (to oblige us all) overcome a dislike.

Wonder not, Clary, that I write to you thus plainly and freely upon this subject. Your behaviour hitherto has been such that we have had no opportunity of entering minutely into the subject with you. Yet, after all that has passed between you and me in conversation, and between you and your uncles by letter, you have no room to doubt what is to be the consequence.—Either child, we must give up *our* authority, or you *your* humour. You cannot expect the one. We have all the reason in the world to expect the other. You know I have told you more than once, that you must resolve to have Mr. Solmes, or never to be looked upon as our child.

The draught of the settlements you may see whenever you will. We think there can be no room for objection to any of the articles. There is still more in them in our family's favour, than was stipulated at first, when your aunt talked of them to you. More so, indeed, than we could have asked. If, upon perusal of them, you think any alteration necessary, it shall be made.—Do, my dear girl, send to me within this day or two, or rather *ask* me for the perusal of them.

As a certain person's appearance at church so lately, and what he gives out everywhere, make us extremely uneasy, and as

that uneasiness will continue while you are single, you must not wonder that a short day is intended. This day fortnight we design it to be, if you have no objection to make that I shall approve of. But if you determine as we would have you, and signify it to us, we shall not stand with you for a week or so.

Come, be a good child, as you used to be, my Clarissa. I have (notwithstanding your past behaviour, and the hopelessness which some have expressed in your compliance) undertaken this one time more for you. Discredit not my hopes, my dear girl! I have promised never more to interfere between your *father* and *you*, if this my most earnest application succeed not. I expect you down, love. Your father expects you down. But be sure don't let him see anything uncheerful in your compliance. If you come, I will clasp you to my fond heart, with as much pleasure as ever I pressed you to it in my whole life. You don't know what I have suffered within these few weeks past; nor ever will be able to guess, till you come to be in my situation; which is that of a fond and indulgent mother, praying night and day, and struggling to preserve, against the attempts of more ungovernable spirits, the peace and union of her family.

But you know the terms. Come not near us, if you resolve to be undutiful; but this, after what I have written, I hope you cannot be.

If you come directly, and, as I said, *cheerfully*, as if your heart were in your duty (and you told me it was *free*, you know), I shall then, as I said, give you the most tender proofs, how much I am,

Your truly affectionate mother.

It was not possible for me to go down upon the prescribed condition. Do you think it was? — And to *write*, if my letter would have been *read*, what could I write that would be admitted, and after what I had written and said to so little effect?

I walked backward and forward. I threw down with disdain the patterns. Now to my closet retired I; then quitting it, threw myself upon the settee; then upon this chair; then upon that then into another — I knew not what to do! — And while I was in this suspense, having again taken up the letter to re-peruse it, Betty came in, reminding me, by order, that my papa and mamma waited for me in my father's study.

Tell my mamma, said I, that I beg the favor of seeing her here for one moment; or to permit me to attend her anywhere by herself.

I listened at the stairs-head — You see, my dear, how it is, cried my father, very angrily; all your condescension (as your indulgence heretofore) is thrown away. *You blame your son's violence*, as you call it [*I had some pleasure in hearing this*]; but

nothing else will do with her. You shall not see her alone. Is my presence an exception to the bold creature?

Tell her, said my mother to Betty, she knows upon what terms she may come down to us. Nor will I see her upon any other.

At last Betty brought me these lines from my father.

UNDUTIFUL AND PERVERSE CLARISSA.

No condescension, I see, will move you. Your mother shall *not* see you; nor will I. Prepare however, to obey. You know our pleasure. Your uncle Antony, your brother, and your sister, and your favourite Mrs. Norton, shall see the ceremony performed privately at your uncle's chapel. And when Mr. Solmes can introduce you to us, in the temper we wish to behold you in, we may perhaps forgive *his* wife, although we never can, in any *other* character, our perverse daughter. As it will be so privately performed, clothes and equipage may be provided afterwards. So prepare to go to your uncle's for an early day in next week. We will not see you till all is over; and we will have it over the sooner, in order to shorten the time of your deserved confinement, and our own trouble in contending with such a rebel, as you have been of late. I will hear no pleas, I will receive no letter, nor expostulation. Nor shall you hear from me any more till you have changed your name to my liking. This from

Your incensed father.

If this resolution be adhered to, then will my father never see me more!—For I will never be the wife of that Solmes—I will die first!—

[Two letters from Clarissa to Miss Howe in which she describes as many angry and fruitless interviews with her sister are omitted here ED.]

Clarissa to Miss Howe.

Wednesday noon, March 22.

I HAVE as yet heard no more of my sister; and have not courage enough to insist upon throwing myself at the feet of my father and mother, as I thought in my heat of temper I should be able to do. And I am now grown as calm as ever; and were Bella to come up again, as fit to be played upon as before.

I am indeed sorry that I sent her from me in such disorder. But my father's letter threatening me with my uncle Antony's house and chapel, terrifies me strangely; and by their silence I am afraid some new storm is gathering.

But what shall I do with this Lovelace? I have just now, by the unsuspected hole in the wall (*that I told you of in my letter by*

Hannah) got a letter from him—So uneasy is he for fear I should be prevailed upon in Solmes's favour; so full of menaces, if I am; so resenting the usage I receive [for, how I cannot tell; but he has undoubtedly intelligence of all that is done in the family;] such protestations of inviolable faith and honour; such vows of reformation; such pressing arguments to escape from this disgraceful confinement—O my dear, what shall I do with this *Love-lace*?

Miss Howe to Miss Clarissa Harlowe.

Thursday morn. 7 o'clock.

MY mother and cousin are already gone off in our chariot and four, attended by their doughty 'squire on horseback, and he by two of his own servants, and one of *my* mother's. They both love parade when they go abroad, at least in compliment to one another; which shews, that each *thinks* the other does. Robin is your servant and mine, and nobody's else—and the day is all my own.

I must begin with blaming you, my dear, for your resolution not to litigate for your right* if occasion were to be given you. Justice is due to ourselves, as well as to everybody else. Still more must I blame you for declaring to your aunt and sister, that you will *not*: since (as they will tell it to your father and brother) the declaration must needs give advantage to spirits who have so little of that generosity for which you are so much distinguished.

There never was a spirit in the world that would insult where it *dared*, but it would creep and cringe where it *dared not*.

* * *

I will postpone, or perhaps pass by, several observations which I had to make on other parts of your letters; to acquaint you, that Mr. Hickman, when in London, found an opportunity to inquire after Mr. Lovelace's town life and conversation.

At the Cocoa-tree, in Pall-mall, he fell in with two of his intimates, the one named Belton, the other Mowbray; both very free of speech, and probably as free in their lives; but the waiters paid them great respect, and on Mr. Hickman's inquiry after their characters called them men of fortune and honour.

They began to talk of Mr. Lovelace of their own accord; and upon some gentlemen in the room asking when they expected him in town, answered, that very day. Mr. Hickman (as they both went on praising Lovelace) said, he had indeed heard that Mr. Lovelace was a very fine gentleman—and was proceeding, when one of them interrupted him, said—Only, sir, the finest gentleman in the world; that's all.

* To her grandfather's estate—Ed.

And he then led them on to expatiate more particularly on his qualities, which they were very fond of doing: but said not one single word in behalf of his morals—*mind that* also in your uncle's style.

Mr. Hickman said, that Mr. Lovelace was very happy, as he understood, in the esteem of the ladies; and smiling, to make them believe he did not think amiss of it, that he pushed his good fortune as far as it would go.

No doubt of it, replied one of them; and out came an oath, with a who would not?—That he did as every young fellow would do.

Very true! said my mother's puritan—but I hear he is in treaty with a fine lady—

So he is, Mr. Belton said—the devil fetch her! [vile brute!] for she engrossed all his time—but that the lady's family ought to be—something—[Mr. Hickman desired to be excused repeating what—though he had repeated what was worse] and might dearly repent their usage of a man of his family and merit.

Perhaps they may think him too wild, cried Hickman: and their's is, I hear, a very sober family—

SOBER: said one of them: a good honest word, Dick!—Where the devil has it lain all this time?—D—me if I have heard of it in this sense ever since I was at college! And then we banded it about among twenty of us as an obsolete.

These, my dear, are Mr. Lovelace's companions: you'll be pleased to take *notice of that!*

Mr Hickman, upon the whole professed to me, upon his *second recovery*, that he had no reason to think well of Mr. Lovelace's morals, from what he had heard of him in town: yet his two intimates talked of his being *more regular* than he *used to be*; that he had made a very good resolution, *that* of old Tom Wharton was the expression, that he would never *give* a challenge, nor *refuse* one; which they praised in him highly: that, in short, he was a very brave fellow, and the most agreeable companion in the world: and would one day make a great figure in his country: since there was nothing he was not capable of—

I am afraid that this last assertion is too true. And this, my dear, is all that Mr. Hickman could pick up about him: and is it not enough to determine such a mind as yours, if not *already* determined?

Yet it must be said too, that if there be a woman in the world that can reclaim him, it is you. And, by your account of his behaviour in the interview between you, I own I have some hope of him. At least, this I will say, that all the arguments he then used with you, seemed to be just and right, and if you *are* to be his—but no more of that: he cannot, after all, deserve you.

Miss Howe to Miss Clarissa Harlowe.

Thursday afternoon, March 23.

AN unexpected visitor has turned the course of my thoughts and changed the subject I had intended to pursue. The only one for whom I would have dispensed with my resolution not to see any body all the dedicated day : a visitor, whom, according to Mr. Hickman's report from the expectations of his libertine friends, I supposed to be in town.—Now, my dear, have I saved myself the trouble of telling you, that it was your too agreeable rake.

The end of his coming was to engage my interest with my *charming friend*; and as he was sure that I knew all your mind, to acquaint him what he had to trust to.

He mentioned what had passed in the interview between you : but could not be satisfied with the result of it, and with the little satisfaction he had obtained from you ; the malice of your family to him increasing, and their cruelty to you not abating. His heart, he told me, was in tumults, for fear you should be prevailed upon in favour of a man despised by every body.

He gave me fresh instances of indignities cast upon himself by your uncles and brother ; and declared, that if you suffered yourself to be forced into the arms of the man for whose sake he was loaded with undeserved abuses, you should be one of the youngest, as you would be one of the loveliest widows in England : and that he would moreover call your brother to account for the liberties he takes with his character to every one he meets with.

He proposed several schemes, for you to choose some one of them, in order to enable you to avoid the persecutions you labour under. One I will mention : that you will resume your estate ; and if you find difficulties that can be no otherwise surmounted, that you will, either avowedly or privately, as he had proposed to you, accept of Lady Betty Lawrence's or Lord M.'s assistance to instate you in it. He declared, that if you did, he would leave you absolutely to your own pleasure afterwards, and to the advice which your cousin Morden on his arrival should give you, whether to encourage his address or not, as you should be convinced of the sincerity of the reformation which his enemies make him so much want.

I told him, as you yourself, I knew, had done, that you were extremely averse to Mr. Solmes ; and that, might you be left to your own choice, it would be the single life. As to himself, I plainly said, that you had great and just objections to him on the score of his careless morals ; that it was surprising, that men who gave themselves the liberties he was said to take, should presume to think, that whenever they took it into their heads to marry, the most virtuous and worthy of their sex were to fall to their lot : that as to the resumption, it had been very strongly urged

by myself, and would be still further urged; though you had been hitherto averse to that measure: that your chief reliance and hopes were upon your cousin Morden; and that to suspend or gain time till he arrived, was, as I believed, your principal aim.

I told him, that with regard to the mischief he threatened, neither the act nor the menace could serve any turn but theirs who persecuted you; as it would give them a pretence for carrying into effect their compulsory projects; and that with the approbation of all the world; since he must not think the public would give its voice in favour of a violent young man, of no extraordinary character as to morals, who should seek to rob a family of eminence of a child so valuable; and who threatened, if he could not obtain her in preference to a man chosen by themselves, that he would avenge himself upon them by all acts of violence.

I added, that he was very much mistaken, if he thought to intimidate *you* by such menaces: for that, though your disposition was all sweetness, yet I knew not a steadier temper in the world than yours; nor one more inflexible (as your friends had found, and would still further find, if they continued to give occasion for its exertion) whenever you thought yourself in the right; and that you were ungenerously dealt with in matters of too much moment to be indifferent about. In short, sir, you must not think to frighten Miss Clarissa Harlowe into such a mean or unworthy conduct as only a weak or unsteady mind can be guilty of.

He was so very far from intending to intimidate you, he said, that he besought me not to mention one word to you of what had passed between us; that what he had hinted at, which carried the air of a menace, was owing to the fervour of his spirits, raised by his apprehensions of losing all hope of you for ever; and on a supposition, that you were to be actually forced into the arms of a man you hated: that were this to be the case, he must own, that he should pay very little regard to the world, or its censures: especially as the menaces of some of your family now, and their triumph over him afterwards, would both provoke and warrant all the vengeance he could take.

He added, that all the countries in the world were alike to him, but on your account. So that whatever he should think fit to do, were you lost to *him*, he should have nothing to apprehend from the laws of this.*

We had a great deal of other discourse: but as the reciting

* Perhaps it will be unnecessary to remind the reader, that although Mr. Lovelace proposes (as above) to Miss Howe, that her fair friend should have recourse to the protection of Mrs. Howe, if further driven: yet he had artfully taken care, by means of his agent in the Harlowe family, not only to inflame the family against her, but to deprive her of Mrs. Howe's, and of every other protection, being from the first resolved to reduce her to an absolute dependence upon himself.

of the rest would be but a repetition of many of the things that passed between you and him in the interview between you in the woodhouse, I refer myself to your memory on that occasion.

Your most affectionate,
ANNA HOWE.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.

Wedn. night, March 22.

ON the report made by my aunt and sister of my *obstinacy*, my assembled relations have taken an *unanimous* resolution (as Betty tells me it is) against me. This resolution you will find signified to me in the enclosed letter from my brother, just now brought me. Be pleased to return it when perused. I may have occasion for it in the altercations between my relations and me.

MISS CLARY,

I am commanded to let you know, that my father and uncles having heard your aunt Hervey's account of all that has passed between her and you: having heard from your sister what sort of treatment she has had from you: having recollected all that has passed between your mother and you: having weighed all your pleas and proposals: having taken into consideration their engagements with Mr. Solmes; that gentleman's patience and great affection for you; and the little opportunity you have given yourself to be acquainted either with his merit or his proposals; having considered two points more; to wit, the wounded authority of a father, and Mr. Solmes's continual entreaties (little as you have deserved regard from him) that you may be freed from a confinement to which he is desirous to attribute your perverseness to him [*averseness* I should have said, but let it go] he being unable to account otherwise for so strong a one, supposing you told truth to your mother when you asserted that your heart *was free*; and which Mr. Solmes is willing to believe, though nobody else does—for all these reasons, it is resolved that you shall go to your uncle Antony's: and you must accordingly prepare yourself so to do. You will have but short notice of the day, for obvious reasons.

I will honestly tell you the motive for your going: it is a double one; first, that they may be sure that you shall not correspond with any body they do not like (for they find from Mrs. Howe, that, by some means or other, you *do* correspond with her daughter; and through her perhaps with somebody else;) and next, that you may receive the visits of Mr. Solmes; which you

have thought fit to refuse to do here; by which means you have deprived yourself of the opportunity of knowing *whom* and *what* you have hitherto refused.

If after one fortnight's conversation with Mr. Solmes, and after you have heard what your friends shall further urge in his behalf, unhardened by clandestine correspondences, you shall convince them that Virgil's *amor omnibus idem* (for the application of which I refer you to the Georgic, as translated by Dryden) is verified in you, as well as in the rest of the animal creation; and that you cannot or will not forego your prepossession in favour of the *moral*, the *virtuous*, the *pious* Lovelace [I would please you if I could!] it will then be considered whether to humour you, or to renounce you for ever.

It is hoped that as you *must* go, you will go cheerfully. Your uncle Antony will make every thing at his house agreeable to you. But indeed he won't promise that he will not, at *proper times*, draw up the bridge.

Your visitors, besides Mr Solmes, will be myself, if you permit me that honour, Miss Clary; your sister, and, as you behave to Mr. Solmes, your aunt Hervey and your uncle Harlowe; and yet the two latter will hardly come neither, if they think it will be to hear your *whining vocatives*.—Betty Barnes will be your attendant; and I must needs tell you, miss, that we none of us think the worse of the faithful maid for your dislike of her: although Betty, who would be glad to oblige you, laments it as a misfortune.

Your answer is required, whether you *cheerfully* consent to go? And your indulgent mother bids me remind you from her, that a fortnight's visits from Mr. Solmes are all that is meant at present.

I am, as you shall be pleased to deserve

Yours, &c,
JAMES HARLOWE, JUN.

So here is the master-stroke of my brother's policy, called upon to consent to go to my uncle Antony's, *avowedly* to receive Mr. Solmes's visits!—A chapel!—A moated house!—Deprived of the opportunity of corresponding with you!—or of any possibility of escape, should violence be used to compel me to be that odious man's!

Friday morning, 6 o'clock.

MRS. Betty tells me, there is now nothing talked of but of my going to my uncle Antony's. She has been ordered, she says, to get ready to attend me thither.

* * * *

Friday, 10 o'clock.

GOING down to my poultry-yard, just now, I heard my brother and sister and that Solmes laughing and triumphing together. The high yew hedge between us, which divides the yard from the garden, hindered them from seeing me.

Never fear, Mr. Solmes, said my brother, but we'll carry our point, if she do not tire *you* out first. We have gone too far in this method to recede. Her cousin Morden will soon be here : so all must be over before that time, or she'll be made independent of us all.

There, Miss Howe, is the reason given for their Jehu-driving.

Mr. Solmes declared that he was determined to persevere while my brother gave him any hopes, and while my father stood firm.

* * *

Mr. Solmes is almost continually here : so is my aunt Hervey : so are my two uncles. Something is working against me, I doubt. What an uneasy state is suspense ! When a naked sword too, seems hanging over one's head !

[In the interval between the dates of these two letters, Clarissa writes to her mother and also to her uncle begging not to be sent away and offering to resign her estate and to bind herself not to marry without her father's consent if they will only permit her to refuse Mr Solmes.—ED.]

Clarissa to Miss Howe.

Tuesday morning, 7 o'clock.

MY uncle has vouchsafed to answer me. These that follow are the contents of his letter ; but just now brought me, although written last night—late I suppose.

MISS CLARY,

Monday night.

SINCE you are grown such a bold challenger, and teach us all our duty, though you will not practise your own, I *must* answer you. Nobody wants your estate from you. Are *you*, who refuse every body's advice, to prescribe a husband to your *sister* ? Your letter to Mr. Solmes is inexcusable. I blamed you for it before. Your parents *will* be obeyed. It is fit they *should*. Your mother has nevertheless prevailed to have your going to your uncle Antony's put off till Thursday : yet owns you deserve not that, or any other favour from her. I will receive no more of your letters. You are too artful for me. You are an ungrateful and unreasonable child : must you have your will paramount to everybody's ? How are you altered !

Your displeased uncle, JOHN HARLOWE,

To be carried away on Thursday—To the moated house—To the chapel—To Mr. Solmes! How can I think of this!—They will make me desperate.

Tuesday morning, 8 o'clock.

I HAVE another letter from Mr. Lovelace. I opened it with the expectation of its being filled with bold and free complaints, on my not writing to prevent his two nights, watching, in weather not extremely agreeable. But, instead of complaints, he is "full of tender concern lest I may have been prevented by indisposition, or by the closer confinement, which he has frequently cautioned me that I may expect."

He says, "He had been in different disguises loitering about our garden and park-wall, all the day on Sunday last; and all Sunday night was wandering about the coppice, and near the backdoor. It rained; and he has got a great cold, attended with feverishness, and so hoarse that he has almost lost his voice."

Why did he not flame out in his letter?—Treated as I am treated by my friends, it is dangerous to be laid under the sense of an obligation to an addresser, patience; especially when such a one suffers in health for my sake.

I can't help saying, I am sorry he has suffered for my sake—but 'tis his own seeking.

His letter is dated last night at eight: and indisposed as he is, he tells me, that he will watch till ten, in hopes of my giving him the meeting he so earnestly requests. And after that, he has a mile to walk to his horse and servant; and four miles then to ride to his inn."

He owns, "That he has an intelligencer in our family; who has failed him for a day or two past: and not knowing how I do, or how I may be treated, his anxiety is increased."

This circumstance gives me to guess who this intelligencer is: Joseph Leman; the very creature employed and confided in, more than any other, by my brother.

This is not an honourable way of proceeding in Mr. Lovelace. Did he learn this infamous practice of corrupting the servants of other families at the French court, where he resided a good while?

He presses me with the utmost earnestness for an interview. He would not presume, he says, to disobey my last personal commands, that he should not endeavour to attend me again in the wood-house. But says, he can give me such reasons for my permitting him to wait upon my father or uncles, as he hopes will be approved by me: Lord M. will accompany him, if I please: or, Lady Betty Lawrence will first make the visit to my mother, or to my aunt Hervey, or even to my uncle's, if I choose it. And such terms shall be offered, as *shall* have weight upon them.

He renews his professions of reformation : he is convinced, he says, that he has already run a long and dangerous course, and that it is high time to think of returning : it *must be* from proper convictions, he adds, that a person who has lived too gay a life, resolves to reclaim, before age or sufferings come upon him.

I cannot but say, I am sorry the man is not well.

* * * *

I am afraid to ask you, my dear, what *you* would have done, thus situated. But what *I have* done, *I have* done. In a word, I wrote, "That I would, if possible, give him a meeting to-morrow night, between the hours of nine and twelve, by the ivy summer-house, or in it, or near the great cascade, at the bottom of the garden ; and would unbolt the door, that he might come in by his own key. But that, if I found the meeting impracticable, or should change my mind, I would signify as much by another line which he must wait for until it were dark."

Tuesday, 11 o'clock.

I AM just returned from depositing my billet. How diligent is this ! It is plain he was in waiting : for I had walked but a few paces, after I had deposited it, when, my heart misgiving me, I returned, to have taken it back, in order to reconsider it as I walked, and whether I should, or should not, let it go. But I found it gone.

In all probability, there was but a brick wall of a few inches thick, between Mr. Lovelace and me, at the very time I put the letter under the brick !

I am come back dissatisfied with myself. But think, my dear there can be no harm in meeting him. If I do *not*, he may take some violent measures. What he knows of the treatment I meet with in malice to him, and with the view to frustrate all his hopes, may make him desperate. His behaviour last time I saw him, under the disadvantages of time and place, and surprised as I was, gives me no apprehension of anything but discovery. What he requires is not unreasonable, and cannot affect my future choice and determination : it is only to assure him from my own lips, that I never will be the wife of a man I hate.

Betty confirms the intimation, that I must go to my uncle's on Thursday. She was sent on purpose to direct me to prepare myself for going, and to help me to get everything up in order for my removal.

* * * *

I retired to my closet, and wrote a few lines to my uncle Harlowe, notwithstanding his prohibition ; in order to get a reprieve from being carried away so soon as Thursday next, if I must go. And this, that I might, if complied with, suspend the appointment

I have made with Mr. Lovelace ; for my heart misgives me as to meeting him ; and that more and more ; I know not why.

I sent it down : my uncle was not gone : and he now stays to know the result of the question put to me in the enclosed answer which he has given to mine.

"Your going to your uncle's was absolutely concluded upon for next Thursday. Nevertheless, your mother, seconded by Mr. Solmes, pleaded so strongly to have you indulged, that your request for a delay will be complied with, upon one condition.

This condition is, that you admit of a visit from Mr. Solmes for one hour, in company of your brother, your sister, or your uncle Antony ; choose which you will.

If you comply not, you go next Thursday to a house which is become strangely odious to you of late, whether you get ready to go or not. Answer therefore directly to the point. No evasion. Name your day and hour. Mr. Solmes will neither eat you, nor drink you."

• JOHN HARLOWE.

After a very little deliberation, I resolved to comply with this condition. All I fear is, that Mr. Lovelace's intelligencer may inform him of it ; and that his apprehensions upon it may make him take some desperate resolution : especially as now (having more time given me here) I think to write to him to suspend the interview he is possibly so sure of. I sent down the following to my uncle.

HONOURED SIR,

ALTHOUGH I see not what end the proposed condition can answer, I comply with it. I wish I could with every thing expected of me. If I must name one, in whose company I am to see the gentleman, and that *one* not my mamma, whose presence I could wish to be honoured by on the occasion, let my uncle, if he pleases, be the *person*. If I must name the *day* (a long day, I doubt, will not be permitted me) let it be next Tuesday. The *hour*, four in the afternoon. The *place*, either the ivy summer-house, or in the little parlour I used to be permitted to call mine.

Your ever dutiful

CL. HARLOWE.

Repenting of my appointment with Mr. Lovelace *before* I had this favour granted me, you may believe I hesitated not a moment to revoke it *now* that I had gained such a respite. Accordingly, I wrote, "that I found it inconvenient to meet him, as I had intended : that the risque I should run of a discovery, and the mis-

chiefs that might flow from it, could not be justified by any end that such a meeting could answer: that I found one certain servant more in my way, when I took my morning and evening airings, than any other: that the person who might reveal the secrets of a family to *him*, might, if opportunity were given him, betray me, or him, to those whom it was his duty to serve: that I had not been used to a conduct so faulty, as to lay myself at the mercy of servants: and was sorry he had measures to pursue that made steps necessary in his own opinion, which, in mine, were very culpable, and which no end could justify: that things drawing towards a crisis between my friends and me, an interview could avail nothing; especially as the method by which this correspondence was carried on, was not suspected, and he could write all that was in his mind to write: that I expected to be at liberty to judge of what was proper and fit upon this occasion: especially as he might be assured, that I would sooner choose death, than Mr. Solmes."

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.

Wednesday morning, nine o'clock.

I AM just returned from my morning walk, and already have received a letter from Mr. Lovelace in answer to mine deposited last night. He must have had pen, ink, and paper with him; for it was written in the coppice; with this circumstance: on one knee, kneeling with the other.

But here you will be pleased to read his letter; which I inclose.

To Miss Clarissa Harlowe.

Good God!

What is *now* to become of me!—How shall I support this disappointment!—No new cause!—On one knee, kneeling with the other, I write!—My feet benumbed with midnight wanderings through the heaviest dews, that ever fell: my linen dripping with the hoar frost dissolving on it!—Day but just breaking—sun not risen to exhale—may it never rise again!—Unless it bring healing and comfort to a benighted soul! In proportion to the joy you had inspired (ever lovely promiser)! in such proportion is my anguish!

O my beloved creature!—But are not your very excuses confessions of excuses inexcusable? I know not what I write!—*That* servant in your way! By the great God of heaven, that servant *was not, dared not, could not* be in your way!—Curse upon the cool caution that is pleaded to deprive me of an expectation so transporting!

And *are things drawing towards a crisis between your friends and you?*—Is not this a reason for me to expect, the *rather* to expect, the promised interview?

CAN *I write all that is in my mind*, say you?—Impossible. —Not the hundredth part of what is in my mind, and in my apprehension, can I write!

O the wavering, the changeable sex!—But can Miss Clarissa Harlowe—

Forgive me, madam!—I know not what I write!

Yet, I must, I do insist upon your promise—or that you will condescend to find better excuses for the failure—or convince me, that stronger reasons are imposed upon *you*, than those you offer. —A promise *once* given (upon *deliberation* given) the *promised* only can dispense with;—except in cases of a very apparent necessity imposed upon the *promiser*; which leaves no power to perform it.

The first promise you ever made me! life and death perhaps depended upon it—my heart desponding from the barbarous methods resolved to be taken with you in malice to me!

* * * *

I dare not re-peruse what I have written—I *must* deposit it—it may serve to show you my distracted apprehension that this disappointment is but a prelude to the greatest of all.—Nor, having here any other paper, am I able to write again if I would on this gloomy spot (gloomy is my soul; and all nature round me partakes of my gloom!)—I trust it therefore to your goodness—if its fervour excite your displeasure rather than your pity, you wrong my passion; and I shall be ready to apprehend, that I am intended to be the sacrifice of more miscreants than one! [have patience with me, dearest creature!—I mean Solmes and your brother only.] But if, exerting your usual generosity, you will excuse and *re-appoint*, may that God, whom you profess to serve, and who is the God of *truth* and of *promises*, protect and bless you, for both; and for restoring to himself, and to hope,

Your ever adoring,
yet almost desponding
LOVELACE.

Ivy-cavern, in the coppice—
day but just breaking

This is the answer I shall return:

Wednesday morning.

I AM amazed, sir, at the freedom of your reproaches. Pressed and teased, against convenience and inclination to give you a private meeting, am I to be thus challenged and upbraided, and

my sex reflected upon, because I thought it prudent to change my mind?—A liberty I had reserved to myself when I made the *appointment*, as you call it. I wanted not instances of your impatient spirit to other people: yet may it be happy for me, that I have this new one: which shows, that you can as little spare *me*, when I pursue the dictates of my own reason, as you do *others*, for acting up to theirs. I am too much alarmed, not to wish and desire, that your letter of this day may conclude all the trouble you have had from, or for,

Your humble servant,
CL. HARLOWE.

Wednesday noon, March 29.

IN this respite till Tuesday, I have a little time to look about me, as I may say, and to consider of what I *have* to do, and *can* do. And Mr. Lovelace's insolence will make me go very home with myself. Not that I think I can conquer my aversion to Mr. Solmes. I am sure I cannot. But, if I absolutely break with Mr. Lovelace, and give my friends convincing proofs of it, who knows but they will restore me to their favour, and let their views in relation to the other man go off by degrees?—Or at least, that I may be safe till my cousin Morden arrives: to whom I think I will write; and the rather, as Mr. Lovelace has assured me, that my friends have written to him to make good their side of the question.

Miss Howe to Miss Clarissa Harlowe.

Thursday morning.

YOUR resolution not to leave your father's house is right—if you can stay in it, and avoid being Solmes's wife.

You have, in your letters to your uncle and the rest, done all that you ought to do. You are wholly guiltless of the consequence, be it what it will. To offer to give up your estate!—That would not I have done! You see this offer staggered them: they took time to consider of it. They made my heart ache in the time they took. I was afraid they would have taken you at your word: and so, but for shame, and for fear of Lovelace, I dare say they would. You are too noble for them.

I have no patience to see you thus made the sport of your brother's and sister's cruelty; for what, after *so much steadiness* on your part, in *so many trials*, can be their hope? *Except indeed it be to drive you to extremity, and to ruin you in the opinion of your uncles, as well as father.*

I urge you by all means to send out of their reach all the

letters and papers you would not have them see. Methinks, I would wish you to deposit likewise a parcel of clothes, linen, and the like, before your interview with Solmes; lest you should not have an opportunity for it afterwards. Robin shall fetch it away on the first orders, by day or by night.

I am in hopes to procure from my mother, if things come to extremity, leave for you to be privately with us.

ANNA HOWE.

Clarissa to Miss Howe.

Friday morning, eleven o'clock.

I HAVE already made up my parcel of linen. My heart ached all the time I was employed about it; and still aches, at the thoughts of its being a necessary precaution.

When the parcel comes to your hands, as I hope it safely will, you will be pleased to open it. You will find in it two parcels sealed up; one of which contains the letters you have not yet seen; being those written since I left you: in the other are all the letters and copies of letters that have passed between you and me since I was last with you.

In a third division, folded up separately, are all Mr. Lovelace's letters written to me since he was forbidden this house, and copies of my answers to them. I expect that you will break the seals of this parcel, and when you have perused them all, give me your free opinion of my conduct.

By the way, not a line from that man!—Not *one* line!—Wednesday I deposited mine. It remained there on Wednesday night. What time it was taken away yesterday I cannot tell: for I did not concern myself about it, till towards night; and then it was not there. No return at ten this day. I suppose he is as much out of humour as I.—With all my heart!

Friday, one o'clock, in the wood-house.

No letter yet from this man! I have luckily deposited my parcel, and have your letter of last night. If Robert take this without the parcel, pray let him return immediately for it. But he cannot miss it, I think; and must conclude that it is put there for him to take away.

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.

Sunday night, April 2.

ALL the family was at church in the morning. They brought

good Dr. Lewen with them, in pursuance of a previous invitation. And the doctor sent up to desire my permission to attend me in my own apartment.

You may believe it was easily granted.

So the doctor came up.

We had a conversation of near an hour before dinner: but, to my surprise, he waived everything that would have led to the subject I supposed he wanted to talk upon. At last, I asked him if it were not thought strange I should be so long absent from church? He made me some handsome compliments upon it: but said, for his part, he had ever made it a rule to avoid interfering in the private concerns of families, unless desired to do so.

I was prodigiously disappointed: but supposing that he was thought too just a man to be made a judge in this cause, I led no more to it, nor, when he was called down to dinner did he take the least notice of leaving me behind him there.

But this was not the first time since my confinement that I thought it a hardship not to dine below. And when I parted with him on the stairs, a tear would burst its way; and he hurried down: his own good-natured eyes glistening; for he saw it.

* * * *

I found in the afternoon a reply to my answer to Mr. Lovelace's letter. It is full of promises, full of vows of gratitude, of *eternal* gratitude is his word, among others still more hyperbolic. Yet Mr. Lovelace, the *least* of any man whose letters I have seen, runs into those elevated absurdities. I should be apt to depise him for it if he did. Such language looks always to me, as if the flatterer thought to *find* a woman a fool, or hoped to *make* her one.

* * * *

Your kind, your generous endeavours to interest your mother in my behalf, will, I hope prevent those harsher extremities to which I might be otherwise driven. And to you I will fly, if permitted, and keep all my promises of not corresponding with any body, not seeing any body, but by your mother's direction and yours.

Your ever affectionate,
CL. HARLOWE.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.

Tuesday morning, six o'clock.

THE day is come!—I wish it were happily over. I have had a wretched night. Hardly a wink have I slept, ruminating upon the approaching interview. The very distance of time to which

they consented, had added solemnity to the meeting which otherwise it would not have had.

Tuesday evening ; and continued through the night.

WELL, my dear, I am alive, and here ! But how long I shall be either here or alive, I cannot say. I have a vast deal to write ; and perhaps shall have little time for it. Nevertheless, I must tell you how the saucy Betty again discomposed me, when she came up with this Solmes's message.

Miss ! Miss ! Miss ! cried she, as fast as she could speak, with her arms spread abroad, and all her fingers distended, and held up, will you be pleased to walk down into your own parlour ?—There is every body, I will assure you, in full *congregation* !—And there is Mr. Solmes, as fine as a lord, with a charming white peruke, fine laced shirt and ruffles, coat trimmed with silver, and a waistcoat standing on end with lace !—Quite handsome, believe me !—You never saw such an alteration !—Ah ! Miss, shaking her head, 'tis pity you have said so much against him ! But you know how to come off for all that !—I hope it will not be too late

Impertinence ! said I—Wert thou bid to come up in this fluttering way ?—And I took up my fan and fanned myself.

Bless me ! said she, how soon these fine young ladies will be put into *flusterations* !—I meant not either to offend or frighten you, I am sure—

Every body there, do you say ?

Who do you call every body—There is your papa !—There is your mamma !—There is your uncle Harlowe !—There is your uncle Antony !—Your aunt Hervey !—*My* young lady !—and my young master !—And Mr. Solmes, with the air of a great courtier, standing up, because he named you :—Mrs. Betty, said he, pray give my humble service to miss, and tell her, I wait her commands.

I trembled so I could hardly stand.

Say I can't go !—But yet when 'tis over 'tis over !—Say, I'll wait upon—I'll attend—I'll come presently—say any thing ; I care not what—but give me my fan, and fetch me a glass of water—

She went, and I fanned myself all the time ; for I was in a flame ; and hemmed and struggled with myself all I could ; and when she returned, drank the water ; and finding no hope presently of a quieter heart, I sent her down, and followed her with precipitation ; trembling so, that, had I not hurried, I question if I could have gone down at all.

There are two doors to *my* parlour, as I used to call it. As I entered at one, my friends hurried out at the other. I just saw the gown of my sister, the last who slid away. My uncle Antony went out with them ; but he staid not long, as you shall hear ; and they all remained in the next parlour, a wainscoat partition only

parting the two. I remember them both in one: but they were separated in favour of us girls for each to receive her visitors in at her pleasure.

Mr. Solmes approached me as soon as I entered, cringing to the ground, a visible confusion in every feature of his face. After half a dozen choaked up madams,—he was very sorry—he was very much concerned—it was his misfortune—and there he stopped being unable presently to complete a sentence.

This gave me a little more presence of mind. Cowardice in a foe begets courage in one's self.

I turned from him, and seated myself in one of the fire-side chairs, fanning myself. I have since recollected, that I must have looked very saucily. Could I have had any *thoughts* of the man, I should have despised myself for it. But what can be said in the case of an aversion so perfectly sincere?

He hemmed five or six times, as I had done above; and these produced a sentence—That I could not but see his confusion. This sentence produced two or three or more. I believe my aunt had been his tutress; for it was his awe, his reverence for so superlative a lady [I assure you!] and he hoped—he hoped—three times he hoped before he told me what—at last it came out, that I was too generous (generosity, he said, was my character) to despise him for such—for such—for such—*true* tokens of his love.

I do indeed see you under some confusion, sir; and this gives me hope, that although I have been compelled, as I may call it, to give way to this interview, it may be attended with happier effects than I had apprehended from it.

He had hemmed himself into more courage.

You could not, madam, imagine any creature so blind to your merits, and so little attracted by them, as easily to forego the interest and approbation he was honoured with by your worthy family, while he had any hope given him, that one day he might, by his perseverance and zeal, expect your favour.

I am but too much aware, sir, that it is upon the interest and approbation you mention, that you build such hope. It is impossible otherwise, that a man, who has any regard for his *own* happiness, would persevere against such declarations as I have made, and think myself obliged to make, in justice to you, as well as myself.

He had seen many instances, he told me, and had heard of more, where ladies had seemed as averse, and yet had been induced, some by motives of compassion, others by persuasion of friends, to change their minds; and had been very happy afterwards: and he hoped this might be the case here.

I have no notion, sir, of compliment, in an article of such importance as this: yet I am sorry to be obliged to speak my mind

so plainly, as I am going to do.—Know then, that I have an invincible objection, sir to your address. I have avowed them with an earnestness that I believe is without example. Because I believe it is without example, that any young creature, circumstanced as I am, was ever treated as I have been treated on your account.

He paused, and seemed a little at a loss: and I was going to give him still stronger and more personal instances of my plain dealing; when in came my uncle Antony.

So, niece, so!—sitting in state like a queen, giving audience! *haughty* audience!—Mr. Solmes, why stand you thus humbly?—Why this distance, man? I hope to see you upon a more intimate footing before we part.

I arose, as soon as he entered—and approached him with a bent knee: Let me, sir, reverence my uncle, whom I have not for so long time seen!—Let me, sir, bespeak your favour and compassion.

You will have the favour of every body, niece, when you know how to deserve it.

If ever I deserved it, I deserve it now.—I have been hardly used!—I have made proposals that ought to be accepted, and such as would not have been *asked* of me.

I will engage never to marry any man, without my father's consent, and yours, sir, and every body's. Did I ever give you any cause to doubt my word?—And here I will take the solemnest oath that can be offered me.—

That is the matrimonial one, interrupted he, with a big voice—and to this gentleman—It shall, it shall, cousin Clary!—And the more you oppose it, the worse it shall be for you.

This and before the man, who seemed to assume courage upon it, highly provoked me.

Then, sir, you shall sooner follow me to the grave *indeed*.—I will undergo the cruelest death—I will even consent to enter into the awful vault of my ancestors, and have that bricked up upon me, rather than consent to be miserable for life.

My uncle was in a terrible rage upon this. He took Mr. Solmes by the hand, shocked as the man seemed to be, and drew him to the window—Don't be surprised, Mr. Solmes, don't be concerned at *this*. We know, and rapt out a sad oath, what women will say in their wrath: the wind is not more boisterous, nor more changeable; and again he swore to that.—If you think it worth your while to wait for such an ungrateful girl as this, I'll engage she'll *veer about*; I'll engage she *shall*. And a third time violently swore to it.

I was going out at the door I came in at; the gentleman looking upon one another, as if referring to each other what to do, or whether to engage *my stay*, or suffer me to go; and whom should

I meet at the door but my brother, who had heard all that had passed !

He bolted upon me so unexpectedly, that I was surprised. He took my hand, and grasped it with violence : Return, pretty miss, said he ; return, if you please. You shall not yet be *bricked up*.—Your *instigating* brother shall save you from that !—O thou fallen angel, said he, peering up to my downcast face—such a sweetness *here* !—and such an obstinacy *there* ! tapping my neck—O thou true woman !—though so young !—But you shall not have your rake : remember that : in a loud whisper, as if he would be decently indecent before the man. You shall be redeemed, and this worthy gentleman, raising his voice, will be so good as to redeem you from ruin—and hereafter you will bless him, or have reason to bless him, for his *condescension* ; that was the brutal brother's word !

He had led me up to meet Mr. Solmes, whose hand he took, as he held mine. Here, sir, said he, take the rebel daughter's hand ; I give it to you now : she shall confirm the gift in a week's time, or will have neither father, mother, nor uncles, to boast of.

I snatched my hand away.

How now, miss !—

And how now, sir !—What right have *you* to dispose of my hand ?—If you govern everybody else, you shall not govern me especially in a point so immediately relative to myself, and in which you neither have, nor ever shall have, anything to do.

I would have broken from him ; but he held my hand too fast.

Let me go, sir !—Why am I thus treated ?—You *design*, I doubt not, with your unmanly gripings, to hurt me, as you do : but again I ask, wherefore is it that I am to be thus treated by *you* ?

He tossed my hand from him with a whirl, that pained my very shoulder. I wept, and held my other hand to the part.

He had no patience, he said, with such a perverse one ; and to think of my reflections upon himself, before he entered. He had only given me back the hand I had not deserved he should touch. It was one of my arts to pretend to be pained.

Mr. Solmes, said he would sooner give up all his hopes of me, than that I should be used unkindly : and he offered to plead in my behalf to them both ; and applied himself with a bow, as if for my approbation of his interposition.

Interpose not, Mr. Solmes, said I, to save me from my brother's violence. I cannot wish to owe an obligation to a man whose ungenerous perseverance is the occasion of *that* violence, and of all my disgraceful sufferings.

And you, sir, turning to my brother, if you think that *meekness* always indicates *tameness* ; and that there is no *magnanimity* without *bluster* ; own yourself mistaken for once, for you shall

have reason to judge from henceforth, that a generous mind is not to be forced; and that—

No more, said the imperious wretch, I charge you, lifting up his hands and eyes. Then turning to my uncle, do you hear, sir? This is your once faultless niece! This is your favourite!

Mr. Solmes looked as if he knew not what to think of the matter; and had I been left alone with him, I saw plainly I could have got rid of him easily enough.

My uncle came to me, looking up also to my face, and down to my feet: And is it possible this can be *you*? All this violence from *you*, Miss Clary?

Yes, it *is* possible, sir—and, I will presume to say this vehemence on my side is but the natural consequence of the usage I have met with, and the rudeness I am treated with, even in your presence, by a brother who has no more right to control me than I have to control him.

I had put myself by this time into great disorder: they were silent, and seemed by their looks to want to talk to one another, (walking about in violent disorders too) between whiles. I sat down fanning myself (as it happened, against the glass) and I could perceive my colour go and come; and being sick to the very heart, and apprehensive of fainting, I rung.

Betty came in. I called for a glass of water, and drank it: but nobody minded me. I heard my brother pronounce the words, Art! female art! to Solmes; which, together with the apprehension that he would not be welcome, I suppose kept *him* back. Else I could see the man was affected. And still fearing I should faint, I arose, and taking hold of Betty's arm, let me hold by you, Betty, said I; let me withdraw. And moved with trembling feet towards the door, and then turned about and made a courtesy to my uncle—Permit me, sir, said I, to withdraw.

Whither go you, niece? said my uncle: we have not done with you yet. I charge you depart not. Mr. Solmes has something to open to you, that will astonish you—And you *shall* hear it.

Only, sir, by your leave for a few minutes into the air, I will return if you command it. I will hear all that I am to hear: that it may be over *now and for ever*—You will go with me, Betty?

And then without any further prohibition I retired into the garden; and there, casting myself upon the first seat, and throwing Betty's apron over my face, leaning against her side, my hands between hers, I gave way to a violent burst of grief or passion, or both; which, as it seemed, saved my heart from breaking, for I was sensible of an immediate relief.

It was near an hour before I was sent for in again. The messenger was my cousin, Dolly Hervey, who, with an eye of compassion and respect (for Miss Hervey always loved me and

calls herself my scholar, as you know) told me my company was desired.

Betty left us.

Who commands my attendance, Miss Hervey? said I—Have you not been in tears, my dear?

Who can forbear tears? said she.

Why, what is the matter, cousin Dolly?—Sure, nobody is entitled to weep in this family, but *me*!

Yes, *I* am, madam, because I love you.

I kissed her; and is it for me, my sweet cousin, that you shed tears?—There never was love lost between us: but tell me, what is designed to be done with me, that I have this kind instance of your compassion for me?

You must take no notice of what I tell you, said the dear girl: but my mamma has been weeping for you too, with me; but durst not let any body see it. O, my Dolly, said my mamma, there never was so set a malice in man as in your cousin James Harlowe. They will ruin the flower and ornament of their family.

By this time we entered the house. Miss Hervey accompanied me into the parlour and left me, as a person devoted, I then thought.

Nobody was there. I sat down, and had leisure to weep, reflecting upon what my cousin Dolly told me.

They were all in my sister's parlour adjoining: for I heard a confused mixture of voices, some louder than others, which drowned the more compassionating accents.

What passed among them, I know not: but my brother came in by the time I had tolerably recovered myself, with a settled and haughty gloom upon his brow—Your father and mother command you instantly to prepare for your uncle Antony's. You need not be solicitous about what you shall take with you. You may give Betty your keys—take them, Betty, if the perverse one has them about her, and carry them to her mother. She will take care to send everything after you that you shall want—but another night you will not be permitted to stay in this house.

I don't choose to give my keys to any body, except to my mother and into her own hands. You see how much I am disordered. It may cost me my life, to be hurried away so suddenly. I beg to be indulged till next Monday at least.

That will not be granted you. So prepare for this very night. And give up your keys. Give them to *me*, miss. I'll carry them to your mother!

Excuse me, brother. Indeed I won't.

Indeed you must. Have you anything you are afraid should be seen by your mother?

Not if I am permitted to attend her.

I'll make a report accordingly.

He went out.

In came Miss Dolly Hervey: I am sorry, madam, to be the messenger—but your mamma insists upon your sending up all the keys of your cabinet, library, and drawers.

Tell my mother, that I yield them up to her commands. tell her, I make no conditions with my mother: but if she find nothing she shall disapprove of, I beg that she will permit me to tarry here a few days longer.—Try, my Dolly [the dear girl sobbing with grief]; try, if your gentleness cannot prevail for me.

She wept still more, and said, it is sad, very sad, to see matters thus carried!

She took the keys, and wrapped her arms about me; and begged me to excuse her for her message; and would have said more; but Betty's presence awed her, as I said.

* * * *

But being a little heavy (for it is now past two in the morning) I will lie down in my clothes.

CL. HARLOWE.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe, to Miss Howe.

Wednesday, 11 o'clock, April 5.

I MUST write as I have opportunity; making use of my concealed stores: for my pens and ink (all of each that they could find) are taken from me; as I shall tell you more particularly by-and-by.

About an hour ago I deposited my long letter to you; as also, in the usual place, a billet to Mr. Lovelace, lest his impatience should put him upon some rashness; signifying, in four lines, "that the interview was over; and that I hoped my steady refusal of Mr. Solmes would discourage any further applications to me in his favour."

Although I was unable (through the fatigue I had undergone, and by reason of sitting up all night, to write to you; which made me lie longer than ordinary this morning) to deposit my letter to you sooner; yet I hope you will have it in such good time, as that you will be able to send me an answer to it this night, or in the morning early; which, if ever so short, will inform me, whether I may depend upon your mother's indulgence or not. This it behoves me to know as soon as possible; for they are resolved to hurry me away on Saturday next at furthest, perhaps to-morrow.

Would but your mother permit you to send her chariot, or chaise, to the by-place where Mr. Lovelace proposes Lord M.'s shall come (provoked, intimidated, and apprehensive as I am), I

would not hesitate a moment what to do. Place me any where, as I have said before—in a cot, in a garret ; any where—disguised as a servant—or let me pass as a servant's sister—so that I may but escape Mr. Solmes on one hand, and the disgrace of refuging with the family of a man at enmity with my own on the other, and I shall be in some measure happy !—Should your good mother refuse me, what refuge, or whose, can I fly to ?—Dearest creature, advise your distressed friend.

* * *

Wednesday night.

ALL is in a hurry below stairs. Betty is in and out like a spy. Something is working, I know not what. I am really a good deal disordered in body as well as mind. Indeed I am quite heart-sick.

I will go down, though 'tis almost dark, on pretence of getting a little air and composure. Robert has my two former, I hope before now : and I will deposit this, if I can, for fear of another search.

I know not what I shall do !—All is so strangely busy !—Doors clapt to—going out of one apartment, hurryingly, as I may say, into another. Betty, in her alarming way, staring, as if of frightened importance ; twice with me in half an hour ; called down in haste by Shorey the last time ; leaving me with still *more* meaning in her looks and gestures—yet possibly nothing in all this worthy of my apprehensions—

Here again comes the creature, with her deep-drawn affected sighs, and her *O dears ! O dears !*

* * *

More dark hints thrown out by the saucy creature. But she will not explain herself. " Suppose this pretty business ends in murder ! " she says, " I may rue my opposition as long as I live, for aught she knows. Parents will not be *baffled* out of their children by impudent gentlemen ; nor is it fit they should. It may come home to me when I least expect it."

These are the gloomy and perplexing hints this impertinent throws out. Probably they arise from the information Mr. Lovelace says he has secretly permitted them to have (from his vile double-faced agent, I suppose !) of his resolution to prevent my being carried to my uncle's.

How *justly*, if so, may this exasperate them !—How am I driven to and fro, like a feather in the wind, at the pleasure of the rash, the selfish, and the headstrong ! and when I am as averse to the proceedings of the one as I am to those of the other ! For although I was induced to carry on this unhappy correspondence, as I think I ought to call it, in hopes to prevent mischief ; yet indiscreet measures are fallen upon by the rash man, before I, who am so much concerned in the event of the present contentions, can be consulted

and between his violence on one hand, and that of my relations on the other, I find myself in danger from both.

Your ever affectionate and grateful

CL. HARLOWE.

Miss Howe to Miss Clarissa Harlowe.

Thursday morning, April 6.

I HAVE your three letters. Never was there a creature more impatient on the most interesting uncertainty than I was, to know the event of the interview between you and Solmes.

I know not what to say to Lovelace; nor what to think of his promises, nor of his proposals to you. 'Tis certain that you are highly esteemed by all his family. The ladies are persons of unblemished honour. My Lord M. is also (as men and peers go) a man of honour. I could tell what to advise any other person in the world to do but you. So much expected from you!—Such a shining light!—Your quitting your father's house, and throwing yourself into the protection of a family, however honourable, that has a man in it, whose person, parts, declarations, and pretensions, will be thought to have engaged your warmest esteem;—methinks I am rather for advising that you should get privately to London; and not let either him, or any body else but me, know where you are, till your cousin Morden comes.

As to going to your uncle's, that you must not do, if you can help it. Nor must you have Solmes, that's certain: not only because of his unworthiness in every respect, but because of the aversion you have so openly avowed to him, which every body knows and talks of, as they do of your approbation of the other. For your reputation-sake, therefore, as well as to prevent mischief, you must either live single, or have Lovelace.

If you think of going to London, let me know; and I hope you will have *time* to allow me a further concert as to the manner of your getting away, and thither, and how to procure proper lodgings for you.

To obtain this *time*, you must palliate a little, and come into some seeming compromise, if you cannot do otherwise. Driven as you are driven, it will be strange if you are not obliged to part with a few of your admirable punctilios.

You will observe, from what I have written, that I have not succeeded with my mother.

I am extremely mortified and disappointed. We have had very strong debates upon it. But, besides the narrow argument of *embroiling ourselves with other people's affairs*, as above mentioned, she will have it, that it is your duty to comply. She says, she was

always of opinion that daughters should implicitly submit to the will of their parents in the great article of marriage ; and that she governed herself accordingly in marrying my father, who at first was more the choice of her parents than her own.

One word more !

I think in my conscience you must take one of these two alternatives ; either to consent to let us go to London together privately [in which case, I will procure a vehicle, and meet you at your appointment at the stile to which Lovelace proposes to bring his uncle's chariot], or to put yourself into the protection of Lord M. and the ladies of his family.

You have another, indeed ; and that is, if you are absolutely resolved against Solmes, to meet and marry Lovelace directly.

Whichsoever of these you make choice of, you will have this plea, both to yourself and to the world, that you are concluded by the same uniform principle that has governed your whole conduct ever since the contention between Lovelace and your brother has been on foot : that is to say, that you have chosen a lesser evil in hope to prevent a greater.

Adieu ! and Heaven direct for the best my beloved creature, prays

Her

ANNA HOWE.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.

Thursday, April 6.

I THANK you, my dearest friend for the kind protection you would have procured for me, if you could.

This kind protection was what I wished for : but my wishes, raised at first by your love, were rather governed by my despair of other refuge than by a reasonable hope : for why indeed should any body embroil themselves for others, when they can avoid it ?

All my consolation is, as I have frequently said, that I have not, by my own inadvertence or folly, brought myself into this sad situation. If I *had*, I should not have dared to look up to any body with the expectation of protection or assistance, nor to you for excuse of the trouble I give you. But nevertheless we should not be angry at a person's not doing that for ourselves, or for our friend, which she thinks she ought *not* to do ; and which she has it in her option either to *do*, or to *let it alone*. Much less have you a right to be displeased with so prudent a mother for not engaging herself so warmly in my favour as you wished she would. If my own aunt can give me up, and that against her judgment, as I may presume to say ; and if my father and mother, and uncles, who

once loved me so well, can join so strenuously against me ; can I expect, or ought *you*, the protection of your mother, in *opposition* to them ?

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.

Thursday night.

THE alarming hurry I mentioned under my date of last night, and Betty's saucy dark hints, come out to be owing to what I guessed they were ; that is to say, to the private intimation Mr. Lovelace contrived our family should have of his insolent resolution to prevent my being carried to my uncle's.

The rash man has indeed so far gained his point, as to intimidate them from attempting to carry me away : but he has put them upon a surer and a more desperate measure : and this has driven me also into one *as* desperate ; the consequence of which, although he could not foresee it,* may perhaps too well answer his great end, little as he deserves to have it answered.

In short, I have done, as far as I know, the most rash thing that ever I did in my life.

But let me give you the motive, and then the action will follow of course.

About six o'clock this evening, my aunt (who stays here all night ; on my account, no doubt), came up, and tapped at my door, for I was writing ; and had locked myself in. I opened it and she then told me, that they had had undoubted information, that a certain desperate *ruffian* had prepared armed men to waylay my brother and uncles, and seize me, and carry me off—surely, she said, I was not consenting to a violence that might be followed by murder on one side or the other ; perhaps on both.

That therefore my father (still more exasperated than before) had changed his resolution as to my going to my uncle's ; and was determined next Tuesday to set out thither *himself* with my mother ; and that (for it was to no purpose to conceal a resolution so soon to be put in execution) I must not dispute it any longer—on Wednesday I must give my hand—as they would have me.

She proceeded ; that orders were already given for a licence ; that the ceremony was to be performed in my own chamber, in presence of all my friends, except of my father and mother, who would not return, nor see me, till all was over, and till they had a good account of my behaviour.

* * * * *

* She was mistaken in this. Mr. Lovelace did foresee this consequence. All his contrivances led to it, and the whole family, as he boasts, unknown to ~~them~~ selves, were but so many puppets danced by his wires

Having shaken off the impertinent Betty, I wrote to Mr. Lovelace, to let him know, "that all that was threatened at my uncle Antony's was intended to be executed *here*. That I had come to a resolution to throw myself upon the protection of *either of his two aunts*, who would afford it me—in short, that by endeavouring to obtain leave on Monday to dine in the ivy summer-house, I would, if possible, meet him without the garden door, at two, three, four or five o'clock on Monday afternoon, as I should be able. That in the meantime he should acquaint me, *whether I might hope for either of those ladies' protection*: and that I might, I absolutely insisted that *he should leave me with either, and go to London himself, or remain at Lord M.'s: nor offer to visit me till I were satisfied that nothing could be done with my friends in an amicable way; and that I could not obtain possession of my own estate, and leave to live upon it: and particularly, that he should not hint marriage to me till I consented to hear him upon that subject.*"

This was the purport of what I wrote: and down into the garden I slid with it in the dark, which at another time I should not have had the courage to do: and deposited it, and came up again unknown to any body.

My mind so dreadfully misgave me when I returned, that to divert in some measure my increasing uneasiness I had recourse to my private pen, and in a very short time ran this length.

And now, that I am come to this part, my uneasy reflections begin again to pour in upon me. Yet what can I do?—I believe I shall take it back again the first thing I do in the morning.

Friday morning.

THE man, my dear, has got the letter!—What a strange diligence! I wish he mean me well, that he takes so much pains! Yet, to be ingenuous, I must own, that I should be displeased if he took less—I wish, however, he had been an hundred miles off!—What an advantage have I given him over me!

Now the letter is out of my power, I have more uneasiness and regret than I had before. For, till now, I had a doubt whether it should or should not go: and now I think it ought *not* to have gone.

CL. HARLOWE

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.

Friday, 1 o'clock.

I HAVE a letter from Mr. Lovelace, full of transports, vows, and promises. I will send it to you inclosed. You'll see how "he

engages in it for Lady Betty's protection, and for Miss Charlotte Montague's accompanying me. I have nothing to do, but to persevere, he says, and prepare to receive the personal congratulations, of his whole family."

But you'll see how he presumes upon my being *his*, as the consequence of throwing myself into that lady's protection.

"The chariot-and-six is to be ready at the place he mentions.' You'll see as to the slur upon my reputation about which I am so apprehensive, how boldly he argues. Generously enough, indeed, were I to be *his*; and had given him reason to believe that I would. —But that I have not done.

How one step brings on another with this encroaching sex! How soon may a young creature, who gives a man the least encouragement, be carried beyond her intentions, and out of her own power! You would imagine, by what he writes, that I have given him reason to think that my aversion to Mr. Solmes is all owing to my favour for him.

The dreadful thing is, that, comparing what he writes from his intelligencer of what is designed against me (though he seems not to know the threatened day) with what my aunt and Betty assure me of, there can be no hope for me, but that I must be Solmes's wife, if I stay here.

Friday, 4 o'clock.

I AM really ill. I was used to make the best of any little accidents that befel me, for fear of making my *then* affectionate friends uneasy: but now I shall make the worst of my indisposition, in hopes to obtain a suspension of the threatened evil of Wednesday next. And if I do obtain it, will postpone my appointment with Mr. Lovelace.

Betty has told them that I am very much indisposed. But I have no pity from any body. I believe, I am become the object of every one's aversion, and that they would be glad I were dead.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.

Sat. morn. 8 o'clock, (April 8.)

WHETHER you will blame me or not, I cannot tell, but I have deposited a letter confirming my resolution to leave this house on Monday next, within the hour mentioned in my former, if possible.

* * * *

Saturday, 10 o'clock.

MR. SOLMES is here. He is to dine with his new relations, as Betty tells me he already calls them.

He would have thrown himself in my way once more. but I hurried up to my prison, in my return from my garden-walk, to avoid him.

I had when in the garden the curiosity to see if my letter was gone: I cannot say with an intention to take it back again if it were not, because I see not how I could do otherwise than I have done; yet, what a caprice! when I found it gone, I began (as yesterday morning) to wish it had not: for no other reason, I believe, than because it was out of my power.

A strange diligence in this man!—He *says*, he almost lives upon the place; and I think so too.

Your most affectionate

CL. HARLOWE.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.

Saturday afternoon.

ALREADY have I an ecstatic answer, as I may call it, to my letter.

“He promises compliance with my will in every article: approves of all I propose; particularly of the private lodging: and thinks it a happy expedient to obviate the censures of the busy and the unreflecting: and yet he hopes, that the putting myself into the protection of either of his aunts (treated as I am treated) would be far from being looked upon by any body in a disreputable light. But every thing I enjoin or resolve upon must, he says be right, not only with respect to my present but future reputation: with regard to which he hopes so to behave himself, as to be *allowed* to be, next to myself, more *properly* solicitous than any body. He will only assure me, that his whole family are extremely desirous to take advantage of the persecutions I labour under, to make their court and endear themselves to me, by their best and most cheerful services: happy if they can in any measure contribute to my present freedom and future happiness.

“He will this afternoon, he says, write to Lord M. and to Lady Betty and Lady Sarah, that he is now within view of being the happiest man in the world, if it be not his own fault; since the only woman upon earth that can make him so, will be soon out of danger of being another man’s; and cannot possibly prescribe any terms to him that he shall not think it his duty to comply with.

“He flatters himself now (my last letter *confirming* my resolution) that he can be in no apprehension of my changing my mind, unless my friends change their manner of acting by me which he is too sure they will not. And now with all his relations

who take such a kind and generous share in his interests, glory and pride themselves in the prospect he has before him."

Thus artfully does he hold me to it.

* * * *

After all, as far as I have gone, I know not but I may still *recede*: and if I do, a mortal quarrel I suppose will ensue.—And what if it does?—Could there be any way to escape this Solmes, a breach with Lovelace might make way for the single life to take place, which I so much prefer: and then I would defy the sex.

Sunday morning.

I RESOLVE then, upon the whole, to stand this one trial of Wednesday next—or, perhaps, I should rather say, of Tuesday evening, if my father hold his purpose, of endeavouring, in person, to make me *read*, or *hear* read, and then *sign*, the settlements.—*That, that* must be the greatest trial of all.

If I am compelled to sign them over-night—then (the lord bless me!) must all I dread follow, as of course, on Wednesday. If I can prevail upon them by my prayers [perhaps I shall fall into fits; for the very first appearance of my father, after having been so long banished his presence, will greatly affect me—if, I say, I can prevail upon them by my prayers] to lay aside their views; or suspend the day, if but for one week; if *not*, but for two or three days; still Wednesday will be a lighter day of trial. They will surely give me time to *consider*, to *argue* with myself. This will not be *promising*. As I have made no effort to get away, they have no reason to suspect me; so I may have an opportunity, in the last resort, to withdraw. Mrs. Norton is to be with me: she, although she should be chidden for it, will in my extremity plead for me. My aunt Hervey *may*, in such an extremity, join with her. Perhaps my mother may be brought over. I will kneel to each, one by one, to make a friend. Some of them have been afraid to see me, lest they should be moved in my favour: does not this give me a reasonable hope that I *may* move them? My brother's counsel, heretofore given, to turn me out of doors to my evil destiny, may again be repeated, and may prevail. *Then* shall I be in no *worse* case than *now*, as to the displeasure of my friends; and thus far *better*, that it will not be my fault that I seek another protection: which even *then* ought to be my cousin Morden's rather than Mr. Lovelace's, or any other person's.

This is the substance of my letter to Mr. Lovelace;

"That I have reasons of the greatest consequence to *myself* (and which, when known, must satisfy *him*) to suspend, for the present, my intention of leaving my father's house: that I have hopes that matters may be brought to a happy conclusion, without taking a step which nothing but the last necessity could justify

and that he may depend upon my promise, that I will die rather than consent to marry Mr. Solmes."

Sunday evening.

THERE remains my letter still !—He is busied, I suppose, in his preparations for to-morrow, But then he has servants. Does the man think he is so *secure* of me, that having appointed, he need not give himself any further concern about me till the very moment ?

Monday morn. (April 10,) seven o'clock.

O MY dear ! there yet lies the letter, just as I left it !

Does he think he is so sure of me ?—Perhaps he imagines that I *dare not* alter my purpose. I wish I had never known him ! I begin now to see this rashness in the light every one else would have seen it in, had I been guilty of it. But what can I do, if he come to-day at the appointed time ! If he receive not the letter, I must see him, or he will think something has befallen me ; and certainly will come to the house.

Nine o'clock.

MY cousin Dolly Hervey slid the inclosed letter into my hand, as I passed by her coming out of the garden.

DEAREST MADAM,

I HAVE got intelligence from one who pretends to know every thing, that you must be married on Wednesday morning to Mr. Solmes. Perhaps, however, she says this only to vex me : for it is that saucy creature Betty Barnes. A licence is got, as she says : and so far she went as to tell me (bidding me say nothing ; but she knew I would) that Mr. Brand is to marry you ; for Dr. Lewen, I hear, refuses, unless your consent can be obtained ; and they have heard that he does not approve of their proceedings against you.

Mr. Brand, I am told, is to have his fortune made by uncle Harlowe and among them.

You will know better than I what to make of all these matters ; for sometimes I think Betty tells me things as if I should not tell you, and yet expects that I will.* For there is great whispering between Miss Harlowe and her ; and I have observed that when their whispering is over, Betty comes and tells me something by way of secret. She and all the world know how much I love you : and so I would *have* them. It is an honour to me to love a young lady who is, and ever was, an honour to all her family, let them say what they will.

*It is easy for such of the readers as have been attentive to Mr. Lovelace's manner of working, to suppose, from this hint of Miss Hervey's, that he had instructed his double-faced agent to put his sweetheart Betty upon alarming Miss Hervey, in hopes she would alarm her beloved cousin (as we see she does,) in order to keep her steady to her appointment with him.

But from more certain authority than Betty's I can assure you (but I must beg of you to burn this letter) that you are to be searched once more for letters, and for pen and ink ; for they know you write. Something they pretend to have come at from one of Mr. Lovelace's servants, which they hope to make something of. I know not for certain what it is. He must be a very vile and wicked man, who would boast of a lady's favour to him, and reveal secrets. But Mr. Lovelace, I dare say, is too much of a gentleman to be guilty of such ingratitude.

Then they have a notion, from that false Betty I believe, that you intend to take something to make yourself sick ; and so they will search for phials and powders, and such like.

If nothing shall be found that will increase their suspicions, you are to be used more kindly by your papa when you appear before them all than he of late has used you.

Yet, sick or well, alas ! my dear cousin ! you must be married. But your husband is to go home every night without you till you are reconciled to him. And so illness can be no pretence to save you.

They are sure you will make a good wife. So would not I unless I liked my husband. And Mr. Solmes is always telling how he will purchase your love by rich presents.—A sycophant man !—I wish he and Betty Barnes were to come together, and he would beat her every day.

After what I have told you, I need not advise you to secure every thing you would not have seen.

Once more let me beg that you will burn this letter : and pray, dearest madam, do not take any thing that may prejudice your health : for that will not do. I am

Your truly loving cousin

D. H.

When I first read my cousin's letter, I was half inclined to resume my former intention ; especially as my countermanding letter was not taken away, and as my heart ached at the thoughts of the conflict I must expect to have with him on my refusal. For, see him for a few moments I doubt I must, lest he should take some rash resolutions ; especially as he has reason to expect I will see him. But here your words, *That all punctilio is at an end the moment I am out of my father's house*, added to the still more cogent considerations of duty and reputation, determined me once more against taking the rash step. And it will be very hard (although no seasonable fainting or wished-for fit should stand my friend) if I cannot gain one month, or fortnight, or week.

Ivy summer-house, two o'clock.

HE has not yet got my letter.

* * * *

I will hasten to deposit this. Then I will for the last time, go to the usual place, in hopes to find that he has got my letter. If he *has*, I will not meet him. If he has *not*, I will take it back, and shew him what I have written. That will break the ice, as I may say, and save me much circumlocution and reasoning: and a steady adherence to that my written mind is all that will be necessary.—The interview must be as short as possible; for should it be discovered, it would furnish a new and strong pretence for the intended evil of Wednesday next.

Your

CL. HARLOWE.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.

St. Albans, Tuesday morn. past one.

O MY DEAREST FRIEND!

AFTER what I had resolved upon, as by my former, what shall I write? What *can* I? With what consciousness, even by *letter*, do I approach you?—You will soon hear (if already you have not heard from the mouth of common fame) that your Clarissa Harlowe is gone off with a man.

O my dearest friend!—But I must make the best of it. I hope that will not be very bad! Yet am I convinced, that I did a rash and inexcusable thing in meeting him; and all his tenderness, all his vows, cannot pacify my inward reproaches on that account.

The bearer comes to you, my dear, for the little parcel of linen which I sent you with far better and more agreeable hopes.

Send not my letters. Send the linen only: except you will favour me with one line, to tell me you love me still; and that you will suspend your censures till you have the whole before you.

Adieu, my dearest friend!—I beseech you to love me still—but alas! what will your mother say?—What will mine?—What my other relations?—and what my dear Mrs. Norton?—And how will my brother and sister triumph!—

Once more adieu. Pity and pray for

Your

CL. HARLOWE.

Miss Howe to Miss Clarissa Harlowe.

Tuesday, 9 o'clock.

I WRITE, because you enjoin me to do so. Love you still!—How can I help it, if I would? You may believe how I stand

aghast, your letter communicating the first news—good God of heaven and earth !—But what shall I say ?—I am all impatience for particulars.

Lord have mercy upon me !—But can it be ?

* * * *

Let me now repeat my former advice—if you are *not* married by this time, be sure delay not the ceremony. Since things are as they are, I wish it were thought that you were privately married before you went away. If these men plead AUTHORITY to our pain, when we are *theirs*—why should we not, in such a case as *this*, make some good out of the hated word, for our reputation, when we are induced to violate a more natural one ?

* * * *

I send what you write for. If there be any thing else you want that is in my power, command without reserve

Your ever affectionate

ANNA HOWE.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.

Tuesday night.

AFTER I had deposited my letter to you, written down to the last hour, as I may say, I returned to the ivy summer-house ; first taking back my letter from the loose bricks : and there I endeavoured, as coolly as my situation would permit, to recollect and lay together several incidents that had passed between my aunt and me ; and comparing them with some of the contents of my cousin Dolly's letter, I began to hope, that I needed not to be so very apprehensive as I have been of next Wednesday.

When the bell rang to call the servants to dinner, Betty came to me and asked, if I had any commands before she went to hers.

I asked her some questions about the cascade, which had been out of order, and lately mended ; and expressed a curiosity to see how it played, in order to induce her [how cunning to cheat myself as it proved !] to go thither, if she found me not where she left me ; it being at a part of the garden most distant from the ivy summer-house.

She could hardly have got into the house when I heard the first signal—O how my heart fluttered !—But no time was to be lost. I stept to the garden-door ! and seeing a clear coast, unbolted the already unlocked door—and there was he, all impatience, waiting for me.

A panic next to fainting seized me when I saw him. My heart seemed convulsed ; and I trembled so, that I should hardly have kept my feet, had he not supported me.

Fear nothing, dearest creature, said he—let us hasten away—the chariot is at hand—and by this sweet condescension, you have obliged me beyond expression or return.

Recovering my spirits a little, as he kept drawing me after him, O Mr. Lovelace, said I, I cannot go with you, *indeed* I cannot—I wrote you word so—let go my hand, and you shall see my letter. It has lain there from yesterday morning, till within this half-hour. I bid you watch to the last for a letter from me, lest I should be obliged to revoke the appointment; and had you followed the direction, you would have found it.

I have been watched, my dearest life, said he, half out of breath—I have been watched in every step I took: and my trusty servant has been watched too, ever since Saturday; and dared not to come near your wall. And here we shall be discovered in a moment.—Speed away, my charmer.—This is the moment of your deliverance—if you neglect this opportunity, you *never* can have such another.

What is it you mean, sir?—Let go my hand; for I tell you [struggling vehemently] that I will sooner die than go with you.

Good God! said he, with a look of wildness and surprise, what is it I hear!—But [still drawing me after him, as he retreated further from the door] it is no time to argue—by all that's good you must go—surely you cannot doubt my honour, nor give me cause to question your own.

As you value me, Mr. Lovelace, urge me no further. I come fixed and resolved. Let me give you the letter I had written.

We have no time to talk. I will give you my reasons at a better opportunity. I cannot go with you now—and once more, urge me no further—surely, I am not to be compelled by every body!

I see how it is, said he, with a dejected but passionate air—what a severe fate is mine—at length your spirit is subdued!—Your brother and sister have prevailed: and I must give up all my hopes to a wretch so *truly* despicable—

Once more I tell you, interrupted I, I never will be his—all may end on Wednesday differently from what you expect—

And it may *not*!—And then, good heavens!

It is to be their last effort, as I have reason to believe—

And I have reason to believe so too—since if you stay, you will inevitably be Solmes's wife.

Not so, interrupted I—I have obliged them in one point. They will be in good humour with me. I shall gain time at least. I am sure I shall. I have several ways to gain time.

Depend, depend upon it, I will sooner die than be Mr. Solmes's. If you would have me rely upon *your* honour, why should you doubt of *mine*?

I doubt not your *honour*, madam ; your *power* is all I doubt. You never, never can have such another opportunity.—Dearest creature, permit me—and he was again drawing me after him.

Whither, sir, do you draw me ? Leave me this moment—do you seek to keep me till my return shall grow dangerous or impracticable ? This moment let me go, if you would have me think tolerably of you.

My happiness, madam, both here and hereafter, and the safety of all your implacable family, depend upon this moment.

To Providence, Mr. Lovelace, and to the law, will I leave the safety of my friends. You shall not threaten me into a rashness that my heart condemns !—Shall I, to promote your happiness, as you call it, destroy all my future peace of mind ?

You trifle with me, my dear life, just as our better prospects begin to open. The way is clear ; just now it is clear ; but you may be prevented in a moment. What is it you doubt ?—May I perish eternally, if your will shall not be a law to me in every thing ! All my relations expect you. Your own appointment calls upon you. Next Wednesday !—Dearest creature ! think of next Wednesday !—And to what is it I urge you, but to take a step that sooner than any other will reconcile you to all whom you have most reason to value in your family ?

Let me judge for myself, sir. Do not you, who blame my friends for endeavouring to compel me, *yourself* seek to compel me. I won't bear it. Your earnestness gives me greater apprehensions, and greater reluctance. Let me go back, then—let me, before it is too late, go back, that it may not be worse for both.—What mean you by this forcible treatment ? Is it thus that I am to judge of the entire submission to my will which you have so often vowed !—Unhand me this moment, or I will cry out for help.

I will obey you, my dearest creature !—And quitted my hand with a look full of tender despondency, that, knowing the violence of his temper, half-concerned me for him. Yet I was hastening from him, when, with a solemn air, looking upon his sword, but catching, as it were, his hand from it, he folded both his arms, as if a sudden thought had recovered him from an intended rashness.

Stay, one moment—but one moment stay, O best beloved of my soul !—Your retreat is secure, if you *will* go ; the key lies down at the door.—But, O madam ; next *Wednesday*, and you are Mr. Solmes's !—Fly me not so eagerly—hear me but a few words.

When near the garden door I stopped ; and was the more satisfied, as I saw the key there, by which I could let myself in again at pleasure. But, being uneasy lest I should be missed, told him I could stay no longer. I had already staid too long. I would write to him all my reasons. And depend upon it, Mr. Lovelace

said I, [just upon the point of stooping for the key, in order to return] I will die, rather than have that man. You know what I have promised, if I find myself in danger.

One word, madam, however ; one word more [approaching me, his arms still folded, as if, as I thought, he would not be tempted to mischief.] Remember only, that I come at your appointment, to redeem you at the hazard of my life, from your gaolers and persecutors, with a resolution, God is my witness, or may he for ever blast me ! to be a father, uncle, brother, and, as I humbly hoped, in your own good time, a *husband* to you, all in one. But since I find you are so ready to cry out for help against me, which must bring down upon me the vengeance of all your family, I am contented to run all risks. I will not ask you to retreat with *me* ; I will attend you into the garden, and into the *house*, if I am not intercepted.

Had he offered to draw his sword upon himself, I was prepared to have despised him for supposing me such a poor novice, as to be intimidated by an artifice so common. But this resolution, uttered with so serious an air, of accompanying me in to my friends, made me gasp with terror.

What can you mean, Mr. Lovelace ?—said I—would you thus expose *yourself* ? Would you thus expose *me* ?—Is this your generosity ? Is every body to take advantage thus of the weakness of my temper ?

And I wept. I could not help it.

He threw himself upon his knees at my feet—Who can bear, said he [with an ardour that could not be feigned, his own eyes glistening] who can bear to behold such sweet emotion ?—O charmer of my heart ! [and, respectfully still kneeling, he took my hand with both his, pressing it to his lips] command me *with* you, command me *from* you ; in every way I am all implicit obedience—but I appeal to all you know of your relations' cruelty to *you*, their determined malice against *me*, and as determined favour to the *man* you tell me you hate (and, oh ! madam, if you did not hate him, I should hardly think there would be a merit in your approbation, place it where you would)—I appeal to every thing you know, to all you have suffered, whether you have not reason to be apprehensive of *that* Wednesday which is my terror !—Whether you can possibly have such another opportunity—the chariot ready : my friends with impatience expecting the result of *your own* appointment : a man whose will shall be entirely your will, imploring you, thus on his knees imploring you—to be *your own mistress* ; that is all ; *nor will I ask for your favour but as upon full proof I shall appear to deserve it.* Fortune, alliance, unobjectionable !—O my beloved creature ! pressing my hand once more to his

lips, let not such an opportunity slip. You never, never, will have such another.

I bid him rise. He arose and I told him, that were I not thus unaccountably hurried by his impatience, I doubted not to convince him, that both he and I had looked upon next Wednesday with greater apprehension than was necessary.

And then stooping to take up the key to let myself into the garden, he started, and looked as if he had heard somebody near the door, on the inside; clapping his hand on his sword.

This frightened me so, that I thought I should have sunk down at his feet. But he instantly reassured me: he thought, he said, he had heard a rustling against the door: but *had* it been so, the noise would have been stronger. It was only the effect of his apprehension for me.

And then taking up the key, he presented it to me,—If you *will* go, madam,—yet I cannot, cannot leave you!—I must enter the garden with you—forgive me, but I *must* enter the garden with you.

And will you, will you thus ungenerously, Mr. Lovelace, take advantage of my fears?—

I have no patience, sir, to be thus constrained. Must I never be at liberty to follow my own judgment? Be the consequence what it may, I will not be thus constrained.

And then, I again offered the key to the door.

Down the ready kneeler dropt between me and that: and can you, madam, once more on my knees let me ask you, look with an indifferent eye upon the evils that may follow? Provoked as I have been, and triumphed over as I shall be, if your brother succeeds, my *own* heart shudders, at times, at the thoughts of what *must* happen; and can yours be unconcerned? Let me beseech you, dearest creature, to consider all these things; and lose not this only opportunity. My intelligence—

Never, Mr. Lovelace, interrupted I, give so much credit to the words of a traitor. Your base intelligencer is but a servant. He may pretend to know more than he has grounds for, in order to earn the wages of corruption. You know not what contrivances I can find out.

I was once more offering the key to the lock, when, starting from his knees, with a voice of affrightment, loudly whispering, and as if out of breath, *They are at the door, my beloved creature!* And taking the key from me, he fluttered with it, as if he would double-lock it. And instantly a voice from within cried out, bursting against the door, as if to break it open, the person repeating his violent pushes, *Are you there?—Come up this moment!—This moment!—Here they are—Here they are both together!—Your pistol this moment! Your gun!*—Then another push, and another

He at the same moment drew his sword, and clapping it naked under his arm, took both my trembling hands in his : and drawing me swiftly after him, Fly, fly, my charmer ; this moment is all you have for it, said he.—Your brother !—Your uncles !—Or this Solmes ! They will instantly burst the door—fly, my dearest life, if you would not be more cruelly used than ever—if you would not see two or three murders committed at your feet, fly, fly, I beseech you.—O Lord !—help, help ! cried the fool, all in amaze and confusion, frightened beyond the power of controlling.

Now behind me, now before me, now on this side, now on that, turned I my affrighted face, in the same moment ; expecting a furious brother here, armed servants there, an enraged sister screaming, and a father armed with terror in his countenance more dreadful than even the drawn sword which I saw, or those I apprehended. I ran as fast as he ; yet knew not that I ran : my fears adding wings to my feet, at the same time that they took all power of thinking from me—my fears, which probably would not have suffered me to know what course to take, had I not had him to urge and draw me after him : especially as I beheld a man, who must have come out of the door, keeping us in his eye, running now towards us ; then back to the garden, beckoning and calling to others, whom I supposed *he* saw, although the turning of the wall hindered *me* from seeing them ; and whom, I imagined to be my brother, my father, and their servants.

Thus terrified, I was got out of sight of the door in a very few minutes : and then, although quite breathless between running and apprehension, he put my arm under his, his drawn sword in the other hand, and hurried me on still faster : my voice, however, contradicting my action, crying, No, no, no, all the while ; straining my neck to look back, as long as the walls of the garden and park were within sight, and till he brought me to the chariot : where, attending, were two armed servants of his own, and two of Lord M.'s on horseback.

Here I must suspend my relation for a while : for now I am come to this sad period of it, my indiscretion stares me in the face ; and my shame and my grief give me a compunction that is more poignant methinks than if I had a dagger in my heart. To have it to reflect, that I should so inconsiderately give in to an interview, which, had I known either myself or him, or in the least considered the circumstances of the case, I might have supposed, would put me into the power of his resolution, and out of that of my own reason.

* * *

This is the Wednesday morning I dreaded so much, that I once thought of it as the day of my doom : but of the Monday, it is plain I ought to have been most apprehensive. Had I staved

and had the worst I dreaded happened, my friends would then have been answerable for the consequences, if any bad ones had followed :—but now, I have this *only* consolation left me that I have cleared them of blame, and taken it all upon *myself*!

You will not wonder to see this narrative so dismally scrawled. It is owing to different pens and ink, all bad, and written by snatches of time ; my hand trembling too with fatigue and grief.

I will not add to the length of it, by the particulars of his behaviour to me, and of our conversation at St. Alban's, and since ; because those will come in course in the continuation of my story ; which no doubt you will expect from me.

Only thus much I will say, that he is extremely respectful (even obsequiously so) at present, though I am so much dissatisfied with him and myself, that he has hitherto had no great cause to praise my complaisance to him. Indeed, I can hardly, at times, bear the seducer in my sight.

The lodgings I am in are inconvenient. I shall not stay in them ; so it signifies nothing to tell you how to direct to me hither And where my next may be, as yet I know not.

Your faithful and affectionate

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Mr. Lovelace to Joseph Leman.

HONEST JOSEPH,

Sat. April 8.

AT length your beloved young lady has consented to free herself from the cruel treatment she has so long borne. She is to meet me without the garden-door, at about four o'clock on Monday afternoon.

I shall have a chariot-and-six ready in the byroad fronting the private path to Harlowe Paddock ; and several of my friends and servants not far off, armed to protect her, if there be occasion : but every one charged to avoid mischief. That you know, has always been my principal care.

All my fear is, that when she comes to the point, the over-niceness of her principles will make her waver, and want to go back ; although *her* honour is my honour you know, and *mine* is *hers*. If she should, and should I be unable to prevail upon her, all your past services will avail nothing, and she will be lost to me for ever : the prey then to that cursed Solmes, whose vile stinginess will never permit him to do good to any of the servants of the family.

Be very mindful therefore of the following directions : take them into your heart. This will probably be your last trouble.

until my beloved and I are joined in holy wedlock : and then we will be sure to take care of you.

Contrive to be in the garden, in *disguise*, if possible, and unseen by your young lady. If you find the garden door unbolted, you will know that she and I are together, although you should not see her go out at it. It will be locked, but my key shall be on the ground just without the door, that you may open it with yours, as it may be needful.

If you hear our voices parleying, keep at the door till I cry *hem, hem*, twice : but be watchful for this signal : for I must not *hem* very loud, lest she should take it for a signal. Perhaps, in struggling to prevail upon the dear creature, I may have an opportunity to strike the door hard with my elbow, or heel, to confirm you—then you are to make a violent burst against the door, as if you would break it open, drawing backward and forward the bolt in a hurry : then, with another push, but with more noise than strength, lest the lock give way, cry out, (as if you saw some of the family), come up, come up, instantly !—Here they are ! Here they are !—Hasten !—This instant ! Hasten ! And mention swords, pistols, guns, with as terrible a voice as you can cry out with. Then shall I prevail upon her, no doubt, if loth before, to fly. If I cannot, I will enter the garden with her, and the house too, be the consequence what it will. But so affrighted, there is no question but she will fly.

When you think us at a sufficient distance [and I shall raise my voice urging her swifter flight, that you may guess at *that*] then open the door with your key : but you must be sure to open it very cautiously, lest we should not be far enough off. I would not have her know you have a hand in this matter, out of my great regard to you.

When you have opened the door, take your key out of the lock, and put it in your pocket : then, stooping for mine, put it in the lock on the *inside*, that it may appear as if the door was opened by herself with a key, which they will suppose of my procuring (it being new) and left open by us.

They *should* conclude she is gone off by her own consent, that they must not pursue us : that they may see no hopes of tempting her back again. In either case, mischief might happen, you know.

Tell the family, that you saw me enter a chariot with her : a dozen, or more, men on horseback, attending us ; all armed ; some with blunderbusses, as you believe ; and that we took the quite contrary way to that we shall take.

You see, honest Joseph, how careful I am, as well as you, to avoid mischief.

This one time be diligent, be careful: this will be the crown of all: and once more, depend for a recompense upon the honour of
Your assured friend, R. LOVELACE.

You need not be so much afraid of going too far with Betty. If you *should* make a match with her, she is a very likely creature, though a vixen, as you say. I have an admirable receipt to cure a termagant wife.—Never fear, Joseph, but thou shalt be master of thine house. If she be very troublesome, I can teach thee how to break her heart in a twelve-month; and *honestly* too;—or the precept would not be mine. I inclose a new earnest of my future favour.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

St. Albans, Monday night.

I SNATCH a few moments while my beloved is retired [as I hope, to rest] to perform my promise. No pursuit—nor have I apprehensions of any; though I must make my charmer dread that there will be one.

I knew that the whole stupid family were in a combination to do my business for me. I told thee that they were all working for me, like so many under-ground moles; and still more blind than the moles are said to be, unknowing that they did so. I myself the director of their principal motions; which falling in with the malice of their little hearts, they took to be all their own.

But did I say my joy was perfect?—O no!—It receives some abatement from my disgusted pride. For how can I endure to think that I owe more to her relations' persecutions than to her favour for me?—Or even, as far as I know, to her preference of me to another man?

But let me not indulge this thought. Were I to do so, it might cost my charmer dear. Let me rejoice that she has passed the Rubicon: that she cannot return: that, as I have ordered it, the flight will appear to the implacables to be altogether with her own consent: and that if I doubt her love, I can put her to trials as mortifying to her niceness as glorious to my pride.—For, let me tell thee, dearly as I love her, if I thought there was but the shadow of a doubt in her mind, whether she preferred me to any man living, I would shew her no mercy.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.

Wednesday, April 12.

I WILL pursue my melancholy story.

Being thus hurried to the chariot, it would have been to no

purpose to have refused entering into it, had he not in my fright lifted me in, as he did : and it instantly drove away at full gallop, and stopped not till it brought us to St. Albans ; which was just as the day shut in.

I thought I should have fainted several times by the way. With uplifted hands and eyes, God protect me ! said I often to myself—can it be I that am here !—My eyes running over, and my heart ready to burst with sighs as involuntary as my flight.

Think, my dear, what were my thoughts on alighting from the chariot ; having no attendant of my own sex ; no clothes but what I had on, and these little suited to such a journey as I had *already* taken, and was *still* to take : neither cloak nor hat, nor any thing but a handkerchief about my neck and shoulders : fatigued to death : my mind still more fatigued than my body : and in such a foam the horses, that every one in the inn we put up at guessed that I was a young giddy creature, who had run away from her friends. This it was easy to see, by their whispering and gaping : more of the people in the house also coming in by turns than was necessary for the attendance.

The mistress of the house, whom he sent in to me, shewed me another apartment ; and seeing me ready to faint, brought me hartshorn and water ; and then, upon my desiring to be left alone for half an hour, retired : for I found my heart ready to burst, on revolving every thing in my thoughts : and the moment she was gone, fastening the door, I threw myself into an old great chair, and gave way to a violent flood of tears, which a little relieved me.

Mr. Lovelace, sooner than I wished, sent up the gentlewoman, who pressed me, in his name, to admit my brother, or to come down to him : for he had told her that I was his sister ; and that he had brought me against my will, and without warning from a friend's house, where I had been all the winter, in order to prevent my marrying against the consent of my friends, to whom he was now conducting me ; and that having given me no time for a travelling dress, I was greatly offended at him.

So, my dear, your frank, your open-hearted friend, was forced to countenance this tale ; which indeed suited me the better, because I was unable for some time to talk, speak, or look up : and so my dejection, and grief, and silence, might very well pass before the gentlewoman and her niece, who attended me, as a fit of sullenness.

* * * *

Before five o'clock (Tuesday morning) the maid-servant came up to tell me my *brother* was ready, and that breakfast also waited for me in the parlour. I went down with a heart as heavy as my eyes, and received great acknowledgments and compliments from

him on being so soon dressed, and ready (as he interpreted it) to continue our journey.

He had the thought which I had not (for what had I to do with thought who had it not when I stood most in need of it?) to purchase for me a cloak and hat, without saying any thing to me. He must reward himself, the artful encroacher said, before the landlady and her maids and niece, for his forethought; and would salute his pretty sullen sister!—He took his reward; and, as he said, a tear with it. While he assured me, still before them [a vile wretch!] that I had nothing to fear from meeting with parents who so dearly loved me.—

How could I be complaisant, my dear, to such a man as this?

When we had got into the chariot, and it began to move, he asked me whether I had any objection to go to Lord M.'s Hertfordshire seat? His lordship, he said, was at his Berkshire one.

I told him, I chose not to go, *as yet*, to any of his relations for that would indicate a plain defiance to my own. My choice was to go to a private lodging, and for him to be at a distance from me: at least till I heard how things were taken by my friends—for that, although I had but little hopes of a reconciliation as it *was*! yet if they knew I was in his protection, or in that of any of his friends (which would be looked upon as the same thing) there would not be room for any hopes at all.

I should govern him as I pleased, he solemnly assured me, in every thing. But he still thought *London* was the best place for me; and if I were once safe there, and in a lodging to my liking, he would go to M. Hall. But as I approved not of London, he would urge it no further.

He proposed, and I consented, to put up at an inn in the neighbourhood of *the Lawn* (as he called Lord M.'s seat in this county) since I chose not to go thither. And here I got two hours to myself, which I told him I should pass in writing another letter to you and in one to my sister, to apprise the family, that I was well; and to beg that my clothes, some particular books, and the fifty guineas I had left in my escritoire, might be sent me.

Mrs. Greame came to pay her *duty* to me, as Mr. Lovelace called it: and was very urgent with me to go to her lord's house: letting me know what handsome things she had heard her lord, and his two nieces, and all the family, say of me; and what wishes for several months past they had put up for the honour she now hoped would soon be done them all.

This gave me some satisfaction, as it confirmed from the mouth of a very good sort of woman all that Mr. Lovelace had told me.

Upon inquiry about a private lodging, she recommended me to a sister-in-law of hers, eight miles from thence.—Where I now

am. And what pleased me the better, was, that Mr. Lovelace (of whom I could see she was infinitely observant) obliged her, of his own motion, to accompany me in the chaise; himself riding on horseback, with his two servants, and one of Lord M.'s.

Your unhappy

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Miss Howe to Clarissa.

Thursday, April 13.

I HAVE this moment your letter.—

Dear creature! I can account for all your difficulties. A young lady of your delicacy!—and with such a man!—I must be brief—

The man's a fool, my dear, with all his pride, and with all his complaisance, *and affected regards to your injunctions*. Yet his ready inventions—

Sometimes I think you should go to Lady Betty's. I know not what to advise you to do.—I *should*, if you were not so intent upon reconciling yourself to your relations. Yet they are implacable. You can have no hopes from them.

All your acquaintance, you may suppose, talk of nobody but you. Some indeed bring your admirable character for a plea against you: but nobody does, or *can*, acquit your father and uncles.

Every body seems apprized of your brother's and sister's motives. Your flight is, no doubt, the very thing they aimed to drive you to, by the various attacks they made upon you; unhoping (as they must do all the time) the success of their schemes in Solmes's behalf. They knew, that if once you were restored to favour, the suspended love of your father and uncles, like a river breaking down a temporary obstruction, would return with double force; and that then you would expose and triumph over all their arts.—And now, I hear they *enjoy* their successful malice.

Your father is all rage and violence. He ought, I am sure, to turn his rage inward. All your family accuse you of acting with *deep art*; and are put upon supposing that you are actually *every hour exulting over them*, with your man, in the success of it.

Your ever affectionate

ANNA HOWE

To Miss Arabella Harlowe.

MY DEAR SISTER,

St. Alban's, April 11.

I HAVE, I confess, been guilty of an action which carries with it a rash and undutiful appearance. And I should have thought

it an inexcusable one, had I been used with less severity than I have been of late; and had I not had too great reason to apprehend, that I was to be made a sacrifice to a man I could not bear to think of. But what is done, is done—perhaps I could wish it had not; and that I had trusted to the relenting of my dear and honoured parents.—Yet this from no other motives, but those of duty to them.—To whom I am ready to return (if I may not be permitted to retire to *the Grove*) on conditions which I before offered to comply with.

Nor shall I be in any sort of dependence upon the person by whose means I have taken this *truly reluctant step*, inconsistent with any reasonable engagement I shall enter into, if I am not further precipitated. Let me not have it to say, now at this important crisis! that I have a sister, but not a friend in that sister. My reputation, dearer to me than life, (whatever you may imagine from the step I have taken) is suffering. A little lenity will, even yet, in a great measure, restore it, and make that pass for a temporary misunderstanding only, which otherwise will be a stain as durable as life, upon a creature who has already been treated with great *unkindness*, to use no harsher a word.

For your own sake, therefore, for my brother's sake, by whom (I must say) I have been thus precipitated, and for all the family's sake, aggravate not my fault, if, on recollecting every thing, you think it one; nor by widening the unhappy difference, expose a sister, for ever—Prays

Your affectionate
CL. HARLOWE.

I shall take it for a very great favour, to have my clothes directly sent me, together with fifty guineas, which you will find in my escritoire (of which I inclose the key); as also the divinity and miscellany classes of my little library; and, if it be thought fit, my jewels.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.

Thursday night, April 13.

I ALWAYS loved writing, and my unhappy situation gives me now enough of it; and you, I fear, too much. I have had another very warm debate with Mr. Lovelace. It brought on the subject which you advised me not to decline, when it handsomely offered. And I want to have either your acquittal or blame for having suffered it to go off without effect.

He provoked me, and I repeated several of the plainest things I had said in our former conversations; and particularly told him that I was every hour more and more dissatisfied with myself, and

with him : that he was not a man, who, in my opinion, improved upon acquaintance : and that I should not be *easy till he had left me to myself*.

I am surprised ! I am amazed, madam, returned he, at so strange a turn upon me !—I am very unhappy, that nothing I can do or say will give you a good opinion of me !—Would to heaven that I knew what I *can* do to obtain the honour of your confidence !

I told him *that I desired his absence*, of all things. I saw not, I said, that my friends thought it worth their while to give me disturbance : therefore if he would set out for London, or Berkshire, or whither he pleased, it would be most agreeable to me, and most reputable too.

He would do so, he *intended to do so*, the moment I was in a place to my liking—in a place convenient for me.

This, sir, will be so, when you are not here to break in upon me, and make the apartments inconvenient.

He did not think this place safe, he replied ; and as I intended not to stay here, he had not been so solicitous, as otherwise he should have been, to enjoin privacy to his servants, nor to Mrs. Grene at her leaving me ; and there were two or three gentlemen in the neighbourhood, he said, with whose servants his gossiping fellows had scraped acquaintance ; so that he could not think of leaving me here unguarded and unattended.—But fix upon any place in England where I could be out of danger, and he would go to the furthestmost part of the king's dominions, if by doing so he could make me easy.

I told him plainly that I should never be in humour with myself for *meeting him* ; nor with him, for *seducing me away* : that my regrets increased, instead of diminished : that my reputation was wounded : that nothing I could do would now retrieve it : and that he must not wonder if I every hour grew more and more uneasy both with myself and him : that upon the whole, I was willing to take care of myself ; and when *he* had left me I should best know what to resolve upon, and whither to go.

He wished he were at liberty, without giving me offence, or being thought to intend to *infringe the articles I had stipulated and insisted upon*, to make one humble proposal to me. But the *sacred regard* he was determined to *pay to all my injunctions* (reluctantly as I had on Monday last put it into his power to serve me) would not permit him to make it, unless I would promise to excuse him, if I did not approve of it.

I asked, in some confusion, what he would say ?

He prefaced and paraded on ; and then out came, with great diffidence and many apologies, and a bashfulness which sat very awkwardly upon him, a proposal of speedy solemnization : which

he said would put all right; and make my first three or four months (which otherwise must be passed in obscurity and apprehension) a round of visits and visitings to and from all his relations; to Miss Howe; to whom I pleased: and would pave the way to the reconciliation I had so much at heart.

Your advice had great weight with me just then, as well as his reasons, and the consideration of my *unhappy situation*: but what could I say? I wanted somebody to speak for me.

The man saw I was not angry at his motion. I only blushed; and that I am sure I did up to the ears; and looked silly and like a fool.

He wants not courage. Would he have had me catch at his first, at his *very* first word?—I was *silent* too—and do not the bold sex take silence for a mark of a favour?—Then, *so lately* in my father's house! Having also declared to him in my letters, before I had your advice, that I would not think of marriage till he had passed through a state of probation, as I may call it—how was it possible I could encourage, with *very* ready signs of approbation, such an early proposal? especially so soon after the free treatment he had provoked from me. If I were to die, I could not.

He looked at me with great confidence; as if (notwithstanding his contradictory bashfulness) he would look me through: while my eye but now-and-then could glance at him—he begged my pardon with great humility: he was *afraid* I would think he deserved no other answer but that of a *contemptuous silence*. True love was fearful of offending [take care, Mr. Lovelace, thought I, how yours is tried by that rule]. Indeed so *sacred a regard* [foolish man!] would he have *to all my declarations made before I honoured him*—

I would hear him no further; but withdrew in a confusion *too visible*, and left him to make his nonsensical flourishes to himself.

I will only add, that, if he really wishes for a speedy solemnization he never could have had a luckier time to press for my consent to it. But he let it go off; and indignation has taken place of it. And now it shall be a point with me, to get him at a distance from me.

I am, my dearest friend,

Your ever faithful and obliged

CL. H.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

WHAT shall we say, if all these complaints of a character wounded these declarations of increasing regrets for meeting

me; of resentments never to be got over for my *seducing* her away; these angry commands to leave her:—what shall we say, if all were to mean nothing but MATRIMONY? And what if my forbearing to enter upon that subject come out to be the true cause of her petulance and uneasiness!

I had once before played about the skirts of the irrevocable obligation; but thought myself obliged to speak in clouds, and to run away from the subject, as soon as she took my meaning, lest she should imagine it to be *ungenerously urged*, now she was in some sort in my power, as she had forbid me beforehand, to touch upon it, till I were in a state of visible reformation, and till a reconciliation with her friends was probable. But now out-argued, out-talented, and pushed so vehemently *to leave* one whom I had no good pretence to *hold*, if she *would* go; and who could so easily, if I had given her cause to doubt, have thrown herself into other protection, or have returned to Harlowe Place and Solmes; I spoke out upon the subject, and offered reasons, although with infinite doubt and hesitation [*lest she should be offended at me*, Belford!] why she should assent to the legal tie, and make me the happiest of men. And O how the blushing cheek, the downcast eye, the silent yet trembling lip, and the heavy bosom, a sweet collection of heightened beauties, gave evidence, that the tender was not mortally offensive!

Charming creature, thought I, is it so soon come to this?—

Am I *already* lord of the destiny of a Clarissa Harlowe? Am I *already* the reformed man thou resolvest I *should* be, before I had the *least* encouragement given me? Is it thus, that *the more thou knowest me, the less thou seest reason to approve of me*?—And can art and design enter into a breast so celestial? To banish me from thee, to insist so rigorously upon my absence, in order to bring me closer to thee, and make the blessing dear?—Well do *thy arts justify mine*; and encourage me to let loose my plotting genius upon thee.

But let me tell thee, charming maid, if thy wishes are at all to be answered, that thou hast yet to account to me for thy reluctance to go off with me, at a crisis when thy going off was necessary to avoid being forced into the nuptial fetters with a wretch, that were he not thy aversion, thou wert no more honest to thy own merit, than to me.

I am *accustomed* to be preferred, let me tell thee, by thy equals in rank too, though thy inferiors in merit; but who is not so? And shall I marry a woman, who has given me reason to doubt the preference she has for me?

No, my dearest love, I have too sacred a regard for thy *injunctions*, to let them be broken through even by thyself. Nor will I take in thy full meaning by blushing silence only. Nor shalt thou

give me room to doubt whether it be necessity or love that inspires this condescending impulse.

Upon these principles, what had I to do, but to construe her silence into contemptuous displeasure? And I begged her pardon for making a motion, which I had so much *reason* to fear would offend her: for the future *I would pay a sacred* regard to her *previous injunctions*, and prove to her by all my conduct the truth of that observation, that true love is always fearful of offending.

And what could the lady say to this? methinks thou asketh.

Say!—Why she looked vexed, disconcerted, teased: was at a loss, as I thought, whether to be more angry with herself, or with me. She turned about, however, as if to hide a starting tear: and drew a sigh into two or three but just audible quavers, trying to suppress it, and withdrew—leaving me master of the field.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

In Continuation.

BUT is it not the divine Clarissa whom I am thus by implication threatening? If virtue be the true nobility, how is she ennobled, and how would an alliance with her ennoble, were not contempt due to the family from which she sprung, and prefers to me!

But again, let me stop.—Is there not something wrong, *has* there not been something wrong, in this divine creature? And will not the reflections upon that wrong (what though it may be construed in *my favour*?*) make me unhappy, when *novelty* has lost its charms, and when, mind and person, she is all my own? Libertines are nicer, if *at all* nice, than other men. They seldom meet with the stand of virtue in the women whom they attempt. And by the frailty of those they have triumphed over, they judge of all the rest. "*Importunity* and *opportunity* no woman is proof against, especially from the persevering lover, who knows how to suit temptations to inclinations;" this, thou knowest, is a prime article of the rake's creed.

And what? (methinks thou asketh with surprise) dost thou question this most admirable of women?—The virtue of a CLARISSA dost thou question?

I do not, I dare not question it. My reverence for her will not let me *directly* question it. But let me, in my turn, ask thee—Is not, may not her virtue be founded rather in *pride* than in *princi-*

* The particular attention of such of the fair sex, as are more apt to read for the sake of amusement, than instruction, is requested to this letter of Mr. Lovelace.

ple?—What may not both *men* and *women* be brought to do, in a *mortified state*? What mind is superior to calamity? Pride is perhaps the principal bulwark of female virtue. Humble a woman, and may she not be *effectually* humbled?

Then who says, Miss Clarissa Harlowe is the paragon of virtue?—Is virtue itself?

All who know her, and have heard of her, it will be answered.

Common bruit!—Is virtue to be established by common bruit only?—Has her virtue ever been *proved*?—Who has dared to try her virtue?

Let me begin then, as opportunity presents—I will : and watch her every step to find one sliding one ; her every moment to find the moment critical. And the rather, as she spares not me, but takes every advantage that offers to puzzle and plague me ; nor expects nor thinks me to be a good man.

If she be a *woman*, and *love* me, I shall surely catch her once tripping : for love was ever a traitor to its harbourer : and love *within*, and I *without*, she will be more than woman, as the poet says, or I *less* than man, if I succeed not.

Now, Belford, all is out. The lady is mine ; shall be *more* mine. Marriage, I see, is in my power, now *she* is so ; else perhaps it had not. If I can have her *without* marriage, who can blame me for trying? if *not*, great will be her glory, and my future confidence. And well will she merit the sacrifice I shall make her of my liberty ; and from all her sex honours next to divine, for giving a proof, “that there was once a woman whose virtue no trials, no stratagems, no temptations, even from the man she hated not, could overpower.”

Now wilt thou see all my circulation : as in a glass wilt thou see it.—CABALA, however, is the word ; * nor let the secret escape thee even in thy dreams.

Miss Howe to Clarissa Harlowe.

YOU hope, you tell me, that you shall have your money and clothes sent you, notwithstanding my opinion to the contrary—I am sorry to have it to acquaint you, that I have just now heard, that they have sat in council upon your letter ; and that your mother was the only person, who was for sending you your things ; and was over-ruled. I charge you therefore to accept of my offer, as by my last : and give me particular directions for what you want, that I can supply you with besides.

Don't set your thoughts so much upon a reconciliation as to prevent your laying hold of any handsome opportunity to give

* This word, whenever used by any of these gentlemen, was agreed to imply an inviolable secret.

yourself a protector ; such a one as the man will be, who, I imagine, husband-like will let nobody insult you but himself.

Your affectionate friend

ANNA HOWE.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.

YOU tell me, my dear, that my clothes and the little sum of money I left behind me, will not be sent me.—But I will still hope. It is yet early days. When their passions subside, they will better consider of the matter ! and especially as I have my ever dear and excellent mother for my friend in this request.

You advise me not to depend upon a reconciliation. I do not, I cannot depend upon it. But nevertheless it is the wish next my heart. And as to this man, what can I do ? You see, *that marriage is not absolutely in my own power*, if I were inclined to prefer it to the trial which I think I ought to have principally in view to make for a reconciliation.

Your own

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.

Friday, April 14.

I will now give you the particulars of a conversation that has just passed between Mr. Lovelace and me ; which I must call agreeable.

It began with his telling me, that he had just received intelligence that my friends were on a sudden come to a resolution to lay aside all thoughts of pursuing me, or of getting me back ; and that therefore he attended me to know my pleasure ; and what I would do, or have *him* do ?

I told him, that I would have him leave me directly ; and that, when it was known to every body that I was absolutely independent of him, it would pass, that I had left my father's house because of my brother's ill usage of me : which was a plea that I might make with justice, and to the excuse of my father as well as of myself.

He mildly replied, that if we could be certain, that my relations would *adhere* to this their new resolution, he could have no objection, since such was my pleasure but, as he was well assured, that they had taken it only from apprehensions, that a more *active* one might involve my brother in some fatal misfortune, there was too much reason to believe, that they would resume their former purpose the moment they should think they *safely* might.

This, madam, said he, is a risk I cannot run. You would think it strange if I could. And yet, as soon as I knew they had

so given out, I thought it proper to apprise you of it, and to take your commands upon it.

Let me hear, said I, willing to try if he had any particular view, what *you* think most advisable?

'Tis very easy to say that, if I durst—*If I might not offend you*—if it were not to *break conditions that shall be inviolable with me*.

Say then, sir, what you *would* say. I can approve or disapprove, as I think fit.

Had not the man a fine opportunity here to speak out? He had. And thus he used it.

To wave, madam, what I *would* say till I have more courage to speak out [*more courage, Mr. Lovelace more courage, my dear!*]—I will only propose what I think will be most agreeable to *you*—suppose, *if you choose not to go to Lady Betty's*, that you take a turn cross the country to Windsor:

Why to Windsor?

Because it is a pleasant place: because it lies in the way either to Berkshire, to Oxford, or to London: *Berkshire*, where Lord M. is at present: *Oxford*, in the neighbourhood of which lives Lady Betty: *London*, whither you may retire at your pleasure: or if you will *have* it so, whither I may go, you staying at Windsor: and yet be within an easy distance of you, if anything should happen, or if your friends should change their new taken resolution. If I had thoughts of any other place than Windsor or nearer to Miss Howe, he wanted but my commands, and would seek for proper accommodations: but, fix as I pleased, further or nearer, he had servants, and they had nothing else to do but to obey me. A grateful thing then he named to me—to send for my Hannah, as soon as I should be fixed: unless I would choose one of the young gentlewomen *here* to attend me. This of Hannah, he might see, I took very well. I said I had thoughts of sending for her, as soon as I got to more convenient lodgings. Upon the whole I told him, that I thought his proposal of Windsor not amiss; and that I would remove thither, if I could get a lodging only for myself and an upper chamber for Hannah: for that my stock of money was but small, as was easy to be conceived: and I should be very loth to be obliged to anybody. I added, that the sooner I removed the better; for that then he could have no objection to go to London, or Berkshire, as he pleased. And I should let every body know my independence.

He again proposed himself, in very polite terms, as my banker. But I, as civilly, declined his offer.

He asked whether I would choose to lodge in the town of Windsor or out of it.

As near the castle, I said, as possible, for the convenience of

going constantly to the public worship ; an opportunity I had been long deprived of.

He should be very glad, he told me, if he could procure me accommodations in any one of the canon's houses ; which he imagined would be more agreeable to me than any other, on many accounts. And as he could depend upon my promise never to have any other man but himself, on the condition to which he had so cheerfully subscribed, he should be easy ; since it was now his part, *in earnest*, to set about recommending himself to my favour, by the *only* way he knew it could be done. Adding, with a very serious air—I am but a young man, madam ; but I have run a long course : let not your purity of mind incline you to despise me for the acknowledgment. It is high time to be weary of it, and to reform : since, like Solomon, I can say, there is nothing new under the sun : but that it is my belief, that a life of virtue can afford such pleasures, on reflection, as will be for ever blooming, for ever new !

I was agreeably surprised. I looked at him, I believe, as if I doubted my ears and my eyes. His aspect however became his words.

I expressed my satisfaction in terms so agreeable to him, that he said, he found a delight in this early dawning of a better day to him, and in *my* approbation, which he had never received from the success of the most favoured of his pursuits.

Surely, my dear, the man *must* be in earnest. He could not have *said* this ; he could not have *thought* it, had he not. What followed made me still readier to believe him.

* * * *

Mr. Lovelace is gone to Windsor, having left two servants to attend me. He purposes to be back to-morrow.

I have written to my aunt Hervey, to supplicate her interest in my behalf, for my clothes, books, and money ; signifying to her, "That, if I may be restored to the favour of my family, and allowed a negative only, as to any man who may be proposed to me, and be used like a daughter, a niece, and a sister, I will stand by my offer to live single, and submit, as I ought, to a negative from my father." Intimating, nevertheless, "That it were perhaps better, after the usage I have received from my brother and sister, that I may be allowed to be distant from them, as well for their sakes as for my own" (meaning, as I suppose it will be taken, at my dairy-house)—offering "to take my father's directions as to the manner I shall live in, the servants I shall have, and in every thing that shall shew the dutiful subordination to which I am willing to conform."

I am equally earnest *with her* in *this* letter, as I was with my *sister* in *that* I wrote to *her*, to obtain for me a speedy reconcil-

ation, that I may not be further precipitated ; intimating, " That, by a timely lenity, all may pass for a misunderstanding only, which, otherwise, will be thought equally disgraceful to them and to me ; appealing to her for the necessity I was under to do what I did."—

Had I owned that I was over-reached, and forced away against my intention, might they not, as a proof of the truth of my assertion, have insisted upon my immediate return to them? And, if I did *not* return, would they not have reason to suppose, that I had *now* altered my mind (if such were my mind), or had not the *power* to return?—Then were I to have gone back, must it not have been upon their own terms? *No conditioning with a father!* is a maxim with my father and with my uncles. If I would have gone, Mr Lovelace would have opposed it. So I must have been under his control, or have run away *from* him, as it is supposed I did *to* him, from Harlowe Place. In what a giddy light would this have made me appear!—Had he constrained me, could I have appealed to my friends for *their* protection, without risking the very consequences, to prevent which (setting up myself presumptuously, as a middle person between flaming spirits) I have run into such terrible inconveniences.

But, after all, must it not give me great anguish of mind, to be forced to sanctify, as I may say, by my seeming *after*-approbation, a measure I was so artfully tricked into, and which I was so much resolved not to take?

How one evil brings on another is sorrowfully witnessed to by

Your ever affectionate

CL. HARLOWE.

Mr. John Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

Friday, April 14.

Now, Belford, can it enter into thy leaden head what I meant by this proposal?—I know it cannot. And so I'll tell thee.

To leave her for a day or two, with a view to *serve her by my absence*, would, as I thought, look like confiding in her favour. I could not think of leaving her, thou knowest, while I had reason to believe her friends would pursue us ; and I began to apprehend that she would suspect that I made a pretence of that intentional pursuit to keep about her and with her. But now that they had declared against it, and that they would *not* receive her if she went back, what should hinder me from giving her this mark of my obedience ; especially as I could leave Will, who is a clever fellow, and can do any thing but write and spell, and Lord M.'s Jonas ; the latter to be dispatched to me occasionally by the former whom I could acquaint with my motions !

Then I wanted to inform myself, why I had not congratulatory letters from Lady Sarah and Lady Betty, and from my cousins Montague, to whom I had written, glorying in my beloved's escape ; which letters, if properly worded, might be made necessary to shew her as matters proceed.

As to Windsor, I had no design to carry her particularly thither ; but somewhere it was proper to name, as she condescended to ask my advice about it. London I durst not ; but very cautiously : and so as to make it her own option : for I must tell thee, that there is such a perverseness in the sex, that when they ask your advice, they do it only to know your opinion, that they may oppose it : though, had not the thing in question been *your* choice, perhaps it had been *theirs*.

Canst thou imagine what I meant by proposing Hannah, or one of the girls here, for her attendant ?

Thou wilt not pretend to guess, thou say'st.

Well, then, I'll tell thee.

Believing she would certainly propose to have that favourite wench about her, as soon as she was a little settled, I had caused the girl to be inquired after, with an intent to make interest, somehow or other, that a month's warning should be insisted on by her master or mistress, or by some other means, which I had not determined upon, to prevent her coming to her. But fortune fights for me. The wench is luckily ill ; a violent rheumatic disorder, which has obliged her to leave her place, confines her to her chamber. Poor Hannah ! How I pity the girl ! These things are very hard upon industrious servants !—I intend to make the poor wench a small present on the occasion—I know it will oblige my charmer.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.

Saturday evening.

MR. LOVELACE has seen divers apartments at Windsor ; but not one, he says, that he thought fit for me, and which at the same time, answered my description.

He has been very solicitous to keep to the letter of my instructions ; which looks well ; and the better I like him, as, although he proposed that town, he came back dissuading me from it : for he said, that, in his journey from thence, he had thought Windsor, although of his own proposal, a wrong choice ; because I coveted privacy, and that was a place generally visited and admired.*

I told him, that if Mrs. Sorlings thought me not an incumbrance, I would be willing to stay here a little longer ; provided he

* This inference of the lady in his favour is exactly what he had hoped for

would leave me, and go to Lord M.'s or to London, whichever he thought best.

He again proposed to send for Hannah. I told him I designed to do so, through you—and shall I beg of you, my dear, to cause the honest creature to be sent to? Your faithful Robert, I think, knows where she is. He took notice of the serious humour he found me in, and of the redness of my eyes. I had just been answering your letter: and had he not approached me, on his coming off his journey, in a very respectful manner; had he not made an unexceptionable report of his inquiries, and been so ready to go from me, at the very first word; I was prepared (notwithstanding the good terms we parted upon when we set out for Windsor) to have given him a very unwelcome reception: for the contents of your last letter had so affected me, that the moment I saw him, I beheld with indignation the seducer, who had been the cause of all the evils I suffer, and have suffered.

He hinted to me, that he had received a letter from Lady Betty, and another (as I understood him) from one of the Miss Montagues. If they take notice of *me* in them, I wonder that he did not acquaint me with the contents.

Sunday morning.

AH! this man, my dear! We have had warmer dialogues than ever yet we have had.

He again, on my declaring myself uneasy at his stay with me here, proposed that I would put myself into Lady Betty's protection; assuring me that he thought he could not leave me at Mrs. Sorling's with safety to myself. And upon my declining to do that, he urged me to make a demand of my estate.

So, sir, you would have me employ a lawyer, would you, notwithstanding what I have ever declared as to litigating with my father?

No, I would not, my dearest creature, snatching my hand, and pressing it with his lips—except you would make *me* the lawyer.

Had he said *me* at first, I should have been above the affectation of mentioning a lawyer.

I blushed. The man pursued not the subject so ardently, but that it was more easy as well as more natural to avoid it than to fall into it.

Would to heaven he might, without offending!—But I *so* over-awed him!—[*over-awed* him!] And so the over-awed, bashful man went off from the subject, repeating his proposal, that I would demand my own estate, or empower some man of the law to demand it, if I *would not* [he put in] empower a happier man to demand it.

* * * *

I told him, I by no means approved of his violent temper : he was too boisterous a man for my liking. I saw *now*, by the conversation that had passed, what was his boasted regard to my *injunctions*; and should take my measures accordingly, as he should *soon* find. And with a half-frighted earnestness, I desired him to withdraw and leave me to myself.

* * * *

I have long been sick of myself : and now I am more and more so. But let me not lose your good opinion. If I do, that loss will complete the misfortunes of

Your
CL. HARLOWE.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.

Sunday night, April 16.

BEFORE I could finish my last to you, he sent up to beg admittance. I returned for answer, that I would see him at my own time : I would neither be invaded nor prescribed to.

Considering how we parted, and my delaying his *audience*, as he sometimes calls it, I expected him to be in no very good humour, when I admitted of his visit ; and by what I wrote, you will conclude that *I* was not. Yet mine soon changed when I saw his extreme humility at his entrance, and heard what he had to say.

I have a letter, madam, said he, from Lady Betty Lawrence, and another from my cousin Charlotte.

Lady Betty, in her letter, expresses herself in the most obliging manner in relation to me. "She wishes him so to behave, as to encourage me to make him soon happy. She desires her compliments to me ; and expresses her impatience to see, as her niece, so *celebrated a lady* [those are her high words]. She shall take it for an honour, she says, to be put into a way to oblige me. She hopes I will not too long delay the ceremony ; because that performed, will be to her, and to Lord M. and Lady Sarah, a sure pledge of her nephew's merits and good behaviour.

She says, "She was always sorry to hear of the hardships I had met with on his account : that he will be the most ungrateful of men, if he make not all up to me : and that she thinks it incumbent upon all their family, to supply to me the lost favour of my own : and, for her part, nothing of that kind, she bids him assure me, shall be wanting."

She concludes with "desiring to be informed of our nuptials the moment they are celebrated, that she may be with the earliest in felicitating me on the happy occasion."

But her ladyship gives me no direct invitation to attend her

before the marriage, which I might have expected from what he had told me.

He then shewed me part of Miss Montague's more sprightly letter, "congratulating him upon the honour he had obtained, of the *confidence of so admirable a lady*." These are her words. *Confidence*, my dear! Nobody, indeed, as you say, will believe otherwise, were they to be told the truth: and you see that Miss Montague (and all his family, I suppose) think the step I have taken an *extraordinary one*. "She also wishes for his speedy nuptials; and to see her new cousin at M. Hall: as do Lord M. she tells him and her sister, and in general all the well-wishers of their family.

"Whenever this happy day shall be passed, she proposes, she says, to attend me, and to make one in my train to M. Hall, if his lordship shall continue as ill of the gout as he is at present. But that should he get better, he will himself attend me, she is sure, and conduct me thither: and afterwards quit either of his three seats to us, till we shall be settled to our mind."

You may believe, my dear, that these letters put me in good humour with him. He saw it in my countenance, and congratulated himself upon it.

He then urged me to go directly to Lady Betty's, on the strength of her letter.

But how, said I, can I do that, were I even out of all hope of a reconciliation with my friends, as her ladyship has given me no particular invitation?

That, he was sure, was owing to her doubt that it would be accepted—else she had done it with the greatest pleasure in the world.

That doubt itself, I said, was enough to deter me: since her ladyship, who knew so well the boundaries of the fit and the unfit, by her not expecting I would accept of an invitation, had she given it, would have reason to think me very forward if I had accepted it; and much more forward to go without it. Then, said I, I thank *you*, sir, I have no clothes fit to go any whither, or to be seen by any body.

O, I was fit to appear in the drawing-room, were full dress and jewels to be excused; and should make the most amiable [he must mean *extraordinary*] figure there. He was astonished at the elegance of my dress. By what art he knew not, but I appeared to such advantage, as if I had a different suit every day. Besides, his cousins Montague would supply me with all I wanted for the present; and he would write to Miss Charlotte accordingly, if I would give him leave.

Do you think me the jay in the fable? said I. Would you have me visit the owners of the borrowed dresses in their own

clothes? Surely, Mr. Lovelace, you think I have either a very low or a very confident mind.

Would I choose to go to London (for a few days only) in order to furnish myself with clothes?

Not at your expense, sir, said I, in an angry tone.

I could not have appeared in earnest to him, in my displeasure at his artful contrivances to get me away, if I were not occasionally to shew my real fretfulness upon the destitute condition to which he has reduced me. When people set out wrong together, it is very difficult to avoid recriminations.

He wished he knew but my mind—that should direct him in his proposals, and it would be his delight to observe it, whatever it were.

My mind is, that you, sir, should leave me—how often must I tell you so?

You know, Mr. Lovelace, proceeded I, why I am so earnest for your absence. It is, that I may appear to the world independent of you; and in hopes, by that means, to find it less difficult to set on foot a reconciliation with my friends. And now let me add (in order to make you easier as to the terms of that hoped-for reconciliation) that since I find I have the good fortune to stand so well with your relations, I will, from time to time, acquaint you, by letter, when you are absent, with every step I shall take, and with every overture that shall be made to me: but not with an intention to render myself accountable to you, neither, as to my acceptance or non-acceptance of those overtures. They know that I have a power given me by my grandfather's will, to bequeath the estate he left me, with other of his bounties, in a way that may affect them, though not absolutely from them; this *consideration*, I hope, will procure me *some* from them when their passion subsides, and when they know I am independent of you.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe.

In Continuation.

Monday morning, April 17.

LATE as I went to bed, I have had but little rest. Sleep and I have quarrelled; and although I court it, it will not be friends.

Mr. Lovelace, who is an early riser as well as I, joined me in the garden about six; and, after the usual salutations, asked me to resume our last night's subject. It was upon lodgings at London, he said.

I think you mentioned one to me, sir—Did you not?

Yes, madam, [but watching the turn of my countenance]

rather as what you would be welcome to, than perhaps approve of.

I believe so too. To go to town upon an *uncertainty*, I own, is not agreeable: but to be obliged to any persons of your acquaintance, when I want to be thought independent of you; and to a person especially, to whom my friends are to direct me, if they vouchsafe to take notice of me at all; is an absurd thing to mention.

* * * *

We had a good deal of discourse upon the same topic. But, at last, the result was this—He wrote a letter to one Mr. Doleman a married man, of fortune and character, desiring him to provide decent apartments ready furnished for a single woman; consisting of a bed-chamber; another for a maid-servant; with the use of a dining-room or parlour. This letter he gave me to peruse; and then sealed it up, and dispatched it away in my presence, by one of his own servants, who having business in town, is to bring back an answer.

I attend the issue of it; holding myself in readiness to set out for London, unless you, my dear, advise the contrary.

Miss Howe to Miss Clarissa Harlowe.

Tuesday, April 18.

I THINK there can be no objection to your going to London. There, as in the centre, you will be in the way of hearing from every body, and sending to any body. And then you will put all his sincerity to the test, *as to his promised absence*, and such like.

But indeed, my dear, I think you have nothing for it but marriage. You may try (that you may say you *have* tried) what your relations can be brought to: but the moment they refuse your proposals, submit to the yoke, and make the best of it. He will be a savage indeed, if he makes you speak out. Yet, it is my opinion that you *must* bend a little, for he cannot bear to be thought slightly of.

Your Hannah cannot attend you. The poor girl left her place about a fortnight ago, on account of a rheumatic disorder, which has confined her to her room ever since. She burst into tears when Kitty carried to her your desire of having her with you; and called herself doubly unhappy, that she could not wait upon a mistress whom she so dearly loved.

Heaven preserve you, and make you as happy as I think you deserve to be, prays

Your ever affectionate

ANNA HOWE.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.

Wedn. morn. April. 19.

I AM glad, my dear friend, that you approve of my removal to London.

If I am to be obliged to any body in England for money, it shall be to you. Your mother need not know of your kindness to me, you say—but she *must* know it, if it be done, and if she challenge my beloved friend upon it : for would you either falsify or prevaricate?—I wish your mother could be made easy on this head.—Forgive me, my dear.—But I know—yet once she had a better opinion of me.—O my inconsiderate rashness!—

* * * *

I am unhappy that I cannot have my worthy Hannah. I am as sorry for the poor creature's illness as for my own disappointment by it. Come, my dear Miss Howe, since you press me to be beholden to you ; and would think me proud if I absolutely refused your favour ; pray be so good as to send her two guineas in my name.

If I have nothing for it, as you say, but matrimony, it yields a little comfort, that his relations do not despise the *fugitive*, as persons of their rank and quality pride might be supposed to do, for having *been* a fugitive.

Thursday, April 20.

Mr. LOVELACE's servant is already returned with an answer from his friend Mr Doleman, who has taken pains in his inquiries, and is very particular. You will see by it, that his friends in town have a notion that we are actually married.

To Robert Lovelace, Esq.

Tuesday night, April 18.

DEAR SIR,

I AM extremely rejoiced to hear, that we shall so soon have you in town, after so long an absence. You will be the more welcome still, if what report says, be true ; which is, that you are *actually married* to the fair lady upon whom we have heard you make such encomiums. Mrs. Doleman, and my sister, both wish you joy if you are ; and joy upon your near prospect if you are not.

I have been in town for this week past, to get help, if I could from my paralytic complaints ; and am in a course for them. Which, nevertheless, did not prevent me from making the desired inquiries. This is the result.

You may have a first floor, well furnished, at a mercer's in Bedford Street, Covent Garden, with conveniencies for servants : and these either by the quarter or month. The terms according to the conveniencies required.

Mrs. Doleman has seen lodgings in Norfolk Street and others in Cecil Street ; but though the prospects to the Thames and Surry hills look inviting from both these streets, yet I suppose they are too near the city.

You may have good accommodations in Dover Street, at a widow's, the relict of an officer in the guards, who dying soon after he had purchased his commission, she *was obliged to let lodgings*.

This may possibly be an objection. But she is very careful, she says, that she takes no lodgers, but of *figure* and *reputation*. She rents two good houses, distant from each other, only joined by a *large handsome passage*. The *inner-house* is the genteelest, and very elegantly furnished ; but you may have the use of a very handsome parlor in the *outer-house*, if you choose to look into the street.

A little garden belongs to the inner-house, in which the old gentlewoman has displayed a true female fancy ! having crammed it with vases, flower-pots, and figures, without number.

As these lodgings seemed to me the most likely to please you, I was more particular in my inquiries about them. The apartments she has to let are in the inner-house : they are a dining-room, two neat parlors, a withdrawingroom, two or three handsome bed-chambers ; one with a pretty light closet in it which looks into the little garden, all furnished in taste. A *dignified clergyman*, his *wife* and *maiden-daughter*, were the last who lived in them. They have but lately quitted them, on his being presented to a considerable church preferment in Ireland.

I had some knowledge of the Colonel, who was always looked upon as a man of honour. His relict I never saw before. I think she has a *masculine air*, and is a *little forbidding at first* : but when I saw her behaviour to two agreeable *maiden gentlewomen*, her husband's nieces, whom, for *that* reason, she calls *doubly* hers, and heard their praises of *her*, I could impute her very bulk to good-humour ; since we seldom see your sour peevish people plump. She lives *reputably*, and is, as I find, *aforehand* in the world.

As we *suppose you married*, but that you have reason, from family differences, to keep it private for the present, I thought it not amiss to hint as much to the widow (but as *uncertainty*, however) ; and asked her, if she could, in that case, accommodate you and your servants, as well as the lady and hers ? She said she could ; and wished, by all means, it were to be so ; since the

circumstance of a person's *being single*, if not as well recommended as this lady, was *one of her usual exceptions*.

If none of these lodgings please, you need not doubt very handsome ones in or near Hanover Square, Soho Square, Golden Square, or in some of the new streets about Grosvenor Square. And Mrs. Doleman, her sister, and myself, most cordially join to offer to your good lady the best accommodations we can make for her at Uxbridge (and also for you, if you are the happy man we wish you to be) till she fits herself more to her mind.

Your sincere and affectionate friend and servant,

THO. DOLEMAN.

You will easily guess, my dear, when you have read the letter, *which* lodgings I made choice of. But first, to try him, I seemed to prefer those in Norfolk Street, for the very reason the writer gives why he thought I would *not*; that is to say, for its neighbourhood to a city so well governed as London is said to be. Nor should I have disliked a lodging in the heart of it, having heard but indifferent accounts of the liberties sometimes taken at the other end of the town.—Then seeming to incline to the lodgings in Cecil Street—then to the mercer's. But he made no visible preference: and when I asked his opinion of the widow gentlewoman's, he said, he thought those the most to my taste and convenience: but as he hoped that I would think lodgings necessary but for a very little while, he knew not which to give his vote for.

I then fixed upon the widow's and he has written accordingly to Mr. Doleman, making my compliments to his lady and sister, for their kind offer.

* * * *

MR. Lovelace has just now, of his own accord, given me five guineas for poor Hannah. I send them inclosed. Be so good as to cause them to be conveyed to her: and to let her know from whom they came.

He has obliged me much by this little mark of his consideration. Indeed I have had the better opinion of him ever since he proposed her return to me.

* * * *

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

Thursday, April 20.

THOU knowest the widow; thou knowest her nieces; thou knowest the lodgings; and didst thou ever read a letter more artfully couched, than this of Tom Doleman? Every possible objection anticipated! Every accident provided against! Every tittle of it plot proof!

Who could forbear smiling, to see my charmer, like a farcical dean and chapter, choose what was before chosen for her; and sagaciously (as *they* go in form to prayers, that Heaven would direct their choice) pondering upon the different proposals, as if she would make me believe, she had a mind for *some other*? The dear sly rogue looking upon me, too, with a view to discover some emotion in me. Emotions I had; but I can tell her, that they lay deeper than her eye could reach, though it had been a sunbeam.

But, Belford, didst thou not mind that sly rogue Doleman's naming *Dover Street* for the widow's place of abode?—What dost think could be meant by that?—'Tis impossible thou shouldst guess. So, not to puzzle thee about it, suppose the *widow Sinclair's in Dover Street* should be inquired after by some officious person, in order to come at characters [Miss Howe is as *sly* as the devil, and as busy to the full]; and neither such a name, nor such a house, can be found in that street, nor a house to answer the description; then will not the keenest hunter in England be at a fault?

But how wilt thou do, methinks thou askest, to hinder the lady from resenting the fallacy, and mistrusting thee the more on that account, when she finds it out to be in another street?

Pho! never mind that; either I shall have a way for it; or we shall thoroughly understand one another by that time; or, if we don't, she'll know enough of me, not to wonder at *such* a peccadillo.

If thou further objectest, that Tom Doleman is too great a dunce to write such a letter in answer to mine;—Canst thou not imagine, that, in order to save honest Tom all this trouble, I who know the town so well, could send him a copy of what he should write, and leave him nothing to do but transcribe?

Thou wouldst wonder if thou knewest one half of my *providences*. To give thee but one—I have already been so good as to send up a list of books to be procured for the lady's closet, mostly at *second hand*. And thou knowest that the women there are all well read.

Miss Howe to Miss Clarissa Harlowe.

Wednesday, April 19.

I HAVE a piece of intelligence to give you, which concerns you much to know.

Your brother having been assured that you are not married, has taken a resolution to find you out, waylay you, and carry you off. A friend of his, a captain of a ship, undertakes to get you on ship-board; and to sail away with you, either to Hull or Leith, in the way to one of your brother's houses.

They are very wicked ; for in spite of your virtue they conclude you to be *ruined*. But if they can be assured when they have you, that you are not, they will secure you till they can bring you out Mrs. Solmes. Meantime, in order to give Mr. Lovelace full employment, they talk of a prosecution which will be set up against him, for some crime they have got a notion of, which they think, if it do not cost him his life, will make him fly his country.

If you can engage Mr. Lovelace to keep his temper upon it, I think you should acquaint him with it, but not to mention Miss Lloyd. Perhaps his wicked agent may come at the intelligence, and reveal it to him. But I leave it to your own discretion to do as you think fit in it. All my concern is, that this daring and foolish project, if carried on, will be a means of throwing you more into his power than ever. But as it will convince you, that there can be no hope of a reconciliation, I wish you were actually married.

Your Hannah was very thankful for your kind present.

Permit me, I beseech you, before you go to London, to send you forty-eight guineas. I mention that sum to oblige you, because, by accepting back the two to Hannah, I will hold you indebted to me fifty.—Surely *this* will induce you ! You know that I cannot want the money.

Your affectionate and faithful

ANNA HOWE.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

Friday, April 21.

AND now, Belford, what wilt thou say, if, like the fly buzzing about the bright taper, I had like to have singed the silken wings of my liberty ? Never was man in greater danger of being caught in his own snares : all my views anticipated ; all my schemes untried : the admirable creature not brought to town ; nor one effort made to know if she be really angel or woman.

I offered myself to her acceptance, with a suddenness, 'tis true, that gave her no time to wrap herself in reserves ; and in terms *less tender* than *fervent*, tending to upbraid her for her past indifference, and to remind her of her injunctions : for it was the fear of her brother, not her love of me, that had inclined her to dispense with those injunctions.

I never beheld so sweet a confusion. What a glory to the pencil, could it do justice to it, and to the mingled impatience which visibly informed every feature of the most meaning and most beautiful face in the world ! She hemmed twice or thrice : her look, now so charmingly silly, then so sweetly significant ; till

at last the lovely teaser, teased by my hesitating expectation of her answer, out of all power of articulate speech, burst into tears and was turning from me with precipitation, when presuming to fold her in my happy arms—O think not, best beloved of my heart, said I, think not, that this motion, which you may believe to be so contrary to your *former injunctions*, proceeds from a design to avail myself of the cruelty of your relations : if I have disobliterated you by it, (and you know with what *respectful tenderness* I have presumed to hint it) it shall be my utmost care for the future—there I stopped—

Then she spoke ; but with vexation—I am—I am—*very* unhappy—tears trickling down her crimson cheeks ; and her sweet face, as my arms still encircled the finest waist in the world, sinking upon my shoulder : the dear creature so absent, that she knew not the honour she permitted me.

But why, but why unhappy, my dearest life ? said I :—all the gratitude that ever overflowed the heart of the most obliged of men—

Justice to myself there stopped my mouth : for what *gratitude* did I owe her for obligations so involuntary ?

Then recovering herself, and her usual reserves, and struggling to free herself from my clasping arms, How now, sir ! said she, with a cheek more indignantly glowing, and eyes of fiercer lustre.

I gave way to her angry struggle ; but absolutely overcome by so charming a display of innocent confusion, I caught hold of her hand as she was flying from me ; and kneeling at her feet, O my angel, said I, (quite destitute of reserve, and hardly knowing the tenor of my own speech ; and had a parson been there, I had certainly been a gone man), receive the vows of your faithful Lovelace. Make him yours, and only yours, for ever. This will answer every end. Who will dare to form plots and stratagems against my wife ? that you are not so is the ground of all their foolish attempts, and of their insolent hopes in Solmes's favour.—O be mine !—I beseech you (thus on my knee I *beseech* you) to be mine. We shall then have all the world with us. And every body will applaud an event that every body expects.

Was the devil in me ! I no more intended all this ecstatic nonsense, than I thought the same moment of flying in the air ! all power is with this charming creature. It is I, not she, at this rate, that must fail in the arduous trial.

Well, but what was the result of this involuntary impulse on my part ?—wouldst thou not think I was taken at my offer ?—an offer so solemnly made, and on one knee too ?

No such thing !—the pretty trifler let me off as easily as I could have wished.

Her brother's project ; and to find that there were no hopes of a reconciliation for her ; and the apprehension she had of the mischiefs that might ensue—these, not *my offer*, nor *love of me*, were the causes to which she ascribed all her sweet confusion—an *ascription* that is high treason against my sovereign pride.

I re-urged her to make me happy—but I was to be postponed to her cousin Morden's arrival. On him are now placed all her hopes.

I raved ; but to no purpose.

Another letter was to be sent, or had been sent, to her aunt Hervey ; to which she hoped an answer.

Yet sometimes I think, that fainter and fainter would have been her procrastinations, had I been a man of courage—but *so fearful was I of offending !*

A confounded thing ! the man to be so bashful ; the woman to want so much courting !—how shall two such come together ; no kind mediatrix in the way ?

Your loving friend

R. LOVELACE.

Mr. Belford to Robert Lovelace, Esq.

Friday, April 21.

THOU, Lovelace, hast been long the *entertainer* ; I the *entertained*. Nor have I been solicitous to animadvert, as thou wentest along, upon thy inventions, and their tendency. For I believed, that with all thy airs, the unequalled perfections and fine qualities of this lady would always be her protection and security. But now that I find thou hast so far succeeded as to induce her to come to town, and to choose her own lodgings in a house, the people of which will too probably damp and suppress any honourable motions which may arise in thy mind in her favour, I cannot help writing : and that professedly in her behalf.

My inducements to this are not owing to virtue ; but if they *were* what hope could I have of affecting thee, by pleas arising from it ?

What then is my motive ?—What, but the true friendship that I bear thee, Lovelace ; which makes me plead *thy own sake* and *thy family's sake*, in the justice thou owest to this incomparable creature ; who, however, so well deserves to have *her sake* to be mentioned as the principal consideration.

Last time I was at M. Hall, thy noble uncle so earnestly pressed me to use my interest to persuade thee to enter the pale, and gave me so many family reasons for it, that I could not help engaging myself heartily on his side of the question ; and the rather as I

knew, that thy own intentions with regard to this fine woman were then worthy of *her*. And of this I assured his lordship; who was half afraid of thee, because of the ill usage thou receivest from her family. But now, that the case is altered, let me press the matter home to thee, from *other* considerations.

By what I have heard of this lady's perfections from every mouth, as well as from thine, and from every letter thou hast written, where wilt thou find such another woman? And why shouldst thou tempt her virtue?—why shouldst thou wish to try where there is no reason to doubt?

Has she not demonstrated, that even the highest provocations were not sufficient to warp her from her duty to her parents, though a native, and, as I may say, an originally *involuntary* duty, because *native*? And is not this a charming earnest that she will sacredly observe a still higher duty into which she proposes to enter, when she does enter, by *plighted* vows, and entirely as a *volunteer*?

That she loves thee, wicked as thou art, and cruel as a panther, there is no reason to doubt. Yet, what a command has she over herself, that such a penetrating self-flatterer as thyself, art sometimes ready to doubt it! Though persecuted on the one hand, as she was, by her own family, and attracted, on the other, by the splendour of thine; every one of whom courts her to rank herself among them?

I plead not for the state from any great liking to it myself. Nor have I, at present, thoughts of entering into it. But, as thou art the last of thy name; as thy family is of note and figure in thy country; and as thou thyself thinkest that thou shalt one day marry: is it possible, let me ask thee, that thou canst have such another opportunity as thou now hast, if thou lettest this slip? A woman in her family and fortune not unworthy of thine own, (though thou art so apt, from pride of ancestry, and pride of heart, to speak slightly of the families thou dislikest; so celebrated for beauty: and so noted at the same time for prudence, for *soul*, (I will say, instead of *sense*) and for virtue.

Wicked as the sober world accounts you and me, we have not yet, it is to be hoped, got over all compunction. Although we find religion against us, we have not yet presumed to make a religion to suit our practices. We despise those who do. And we know better than to be even *doubters*. In short, we believe a future state of rewards and punishments. But as we have so much youth and health in hand, we hope to have time for repentance. That is to say, in plain English, [nor think thou me too grave, *Lovelace*; *thou* art grave sometimes, though not often] we

hope to live to sense, as long as sense can relish, and purpose to reform when we can sin no longer.

And shall this admirable woman suffer for her generous endeavours to set on foot thy reformation; and for insisting upon proofs of the sincerity of thy professions before she will be thine?

Upon the whole matter, let me wish thee to consider well what thou art about, before thou goest a step further in the path which thou hast chalked out for thyself to tread, and art just going to enter upon. Hitherto all is so far right, that if the lady *mistrusts* thy honour, she has no *proofs*. Be honest to her, then, in *her* sense of the word. None of thy companions, thou knowest, will offer to laugh at what *thou* dost. And if they *should*, (on thy entering into a state which has been so much ridiculed by thee, and by all of us) thou hast one advantage—it is this; that thou canst not be ashamed.

I suppose you will soon be in town. Without the lady I hope. Farewell.

Be honest, and be happy.

J. BELFORD.

Sat. April 22.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.

Sunday afternoon, April 23.

O MY best, my *only* friend! now indeed is my heart broken. it has received a blow it never will recover. Think not of corresponding with a wretch who now seems absolutely devoted. How can it be otherwise, if a parent's curses have the weight I always attributed to them, and have heard so many instances in confirmation of that weight!—Yes, my dear Miss Howe, superadded to all my afflictions, I have the consequences of a father's curse to struggle with! How shall I support this reflection!—my past and my present situation so much authorizing my apprehensions!

I have, at last, a letter from my unrelenting sister.

I am in the depth of vapourish despondency. I can only repeat, shun, fly, correspond not with a wretch so devoted as

CL. HARLOWE.

To Miss Clarissa Harlowe.

Harlowe Place, April 15.

SISTER THAT WAS!

FOR I know not what name you are *permitted*, or *choose* to go by.

You have filled us all with distraction. My father, in the first agitations of his mind, on discovering your wicked, your shameful elopement, imprecated on his knees a fearful curse upon you. Tremble at the recital of it!—No less, than “that you may meet your punishment both *here* and *hereafter*, by means of the very wretch, in whom you have chosen to place your wicked confidence.”

Your clothes will not be sent you. You seem, by leaving them behind you, to have been secure of them, whenever you demanded them, but perhaps you could think of nothing but meeting your fellow: nothing but how to get off with your forward self!—For every thing seems to have been forgotten but what was to contribute to your wicked flight—yet you judged right, perhaps, that you would have been detected, had you endeavoured to get away your clothes.—Cunning creature! not to make one step that we could guess at you by! Cunning to effect your own ruin, and the disgrace of all the family!

But does the wretch put you upon writing for your things, for fear you should be too expensive to him?—That’s it, I suppose.

Was there ever a giddier creature!—Yet this is the celebrated, the blazing *Clarissa*—*Clarissa what?* *Harlowe*, no doubt!—And *Harlowe* it will be, to the disgrace of us all!

Your drawings and your pieces are all taken down; as is also your own whole-length picture, in the *Vandyke* taste, from your late parlour: they are taken down, and thrown into your closet, which will be nailed up, as if it were not a part of the house; there to perish together: for who can bear to see them?

Your books, since they have not taught you what belongs to your family, to your sex, and to your education, will not be sent you. Your money neither. Nor yet the jewels so undeservedly made yours. For it is wished you may be seen a beggar along *London* streets.

If all this is heavy, lay your hand to your heart, and ask yourself why you have deserved it?

Every man whom your pride taught you to reject with scorn (*Mr. Solmes* excepted, who, however, has reason to rejoice that he missed you) triumphs in your shameful elopement; and now knows how to account for his being refused.

Your worthy *Norton* is ashamed of you, and mingles her tears with your mother’s; both reproaching themselves for their shares in you, and in so fruitless an education.

Every body, in short, is ashamed of you: but none more than
ARABELLA HARLOWE.

Miss Howe to Miss Clarissa Harlowe.

Tuesday, April 25.

BE comforted ; be not dejected ; do not despond, my dearest and best beloved friend. God Almighty is just and gracious, and gives not his assent to rash and inhuman curses. Can you think that Heaven will seal to the black passions of its depraved creatures ? If it did, malice, envy, and revenge would triumph ; and the best of the human race, blasted by malignity of the worst, would be miserable in both worlds.

If you consider this malediction as it ought to be considered, a person of your piety must and will rather pity and pray for your *rash father* than terrify *yourself* on the occasion. None but God can curse. Parents, or others, whoever they be, can only pray to him to curse : and such prayers can have no weight with a just and all-perfect Being, the motives to which are unreasonable and the end proposed by them cruel.

Has not God commanded us *to bless, and curse not* ? Pray for your father then, I repeat, that he incur not the malediction he has announced on you ; since he has broken, as you see, a command truly divine ; while you, by obeying that other precept, which enjoins us *to pray for them that persecute and curse us*, will turn the curse into a blessing.

My mother blames them for this wicked letter of your sister ; and she pities you ; and of her own accord, wished me to write to comfort you, for this once : for she says it is pity your heart, which was so noble (and when the sense of your fault, and the weight of a parent's curse, are so strong upon you) should be quite broken.

I would not have your thoughts dwell on the contents of your sister's shocking letter ; but pursue other subjects—the subjects before you. And let me know your progress with Lovelace, and what he says to this diabolical curse. So far you may enter into this hateful subject. I expect that this will aptly introduce the grand topic between you, without needing a mediator.

Come, my dear, when things are at worst they will mend. Good often comes when evil is expected.—But if you despond, there can be no hopes of cure. Don't let them break your heart ; for that it is plain to me is now what some people have in view to do.

How poor to withhold from you your books, your jewels, and your money ! As money is all you can at present want, since they will vouchsafe to send your clothes, I send fifty guineas by the bearer, inclosed in single papers in my *Norris's Miscellanies*. I charge you, as you love me, return them not.

I have more at your service. So if you like not your lodgings

or his behaviour when you get to town, leave both them and him directly.

I would advise you to write to Mr. Morden without delay. If he intends for England, it may hasten him, And you will do very well till he can come. But surely Lovelace will be infatuated, if he secure not his happiness by *your consent*, before that of Mr. Morden's is made needful on his arrival.

(Once more, my dear, let me beg of you to be comforted. Manage with your usual prudence the stake before you, and all will still be happy. Suppose yourself to be *me*, and me to be *you*; and then you will add full day to these but glimmering lights which are held out to you by)

Your ever affectionate and faithful

ANNA HOWE.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

Monday, April 24.

FATE is weaving a whimsical web for thy friend; and I see not but I shall be inevitably manacled.

Here have I been at work, dig, dig, dig, like a cunning miner, at one time, and spreading my snares like an artful fowler, at another, and exulting in my contrivances to get this inimitable creature absolutely into my power. Every thing made for me. Her brother and uncles were but my pioneers: her father stormed as I directed him to storm. Mrs. Howe was acted by the springs I set at work: her daughter was moving for me, and yet imagined herself plump against me, and the dear creature herself had already run her stubborn neck into my gin, and knew not that she was caught, for I had not drawn my springes close about her; and just as all this was completed wouldst thou believe, that I should be my own enemy, and her friend?—that I should be so totally diverted from all my favourite purposes, as to propose to marry her before I went to town, in order to put it out of my own power to resume them?

Well, but how comes all this about? methinks thou askest.—

I will tell thee—I was *in danger of losing my charmer for ever*.—She was soaring upward to her native skies.

This in short, was the case—while she was refusing all manner of obligation to me, keeping me at haughty distance, in hopes that her cousin Morden's arrival would soon fix her in a full and absolute independence of me: disgusted likewise at her adorer for holding himself the reins of his own passions, instead of giving them up to her control—she writes a letter urging an answer to a letter before sent, for her apparel, her jewels, and some gold,

which she had left behind her; all of which was to save her pride from obligation, and to promote the independence her heart was set upon. And what followed but a shocking answer, made still more shocking by the communication of a father's curse upon a daughter deserving only blessings!

Absent when it came; on my return I found her recovering from fits, again to fall into stronger fits; and nobody expecting her life; half a dozen messengers dispatched to find me out. Nor wonder at her being so affected; she whose filial piety gave her dreadful faith in a father's curses: and the curse of this gloomy tyrant extending to *both worlds*—O that it had turned, in the moment of its utterance, to a mortal quinsy, and sticking in his gullet, had choked the old execrator, as a warning to all such unnatural fathers!

What a miscreant had I been not to have endeavoured to bring her back, by all the endearments, by all the vows, by all the offers that I could make her!

I *did* bring her back. More than a father to her: for I have given her a life her unnatural father had well nigh taken away: shall I not cherish the fruits of my own benefaction? I was earnest in my vows to marry; and my ardour to urge the present time was a *real* ardour. But extreme dejection with a mingled delicacy, that in her dying moments I doubt not she will preserve, have caused her to refuse me the *time*, though not the solemnity; for she has told me, that now she must be wholly in my protection [*being destitute of every other*].

Low, very low, she remains; yet dreading her stupid brother's enterprise, she wants to be in London; where, but for *this* accident, and (wouldst thou have believed it?) for *my persuasions*, seeing her so very ill, she would have been this night; and we shall actually set out on Wednesday morning, if she be not worse.

But to return to my principal subject; let me observe, that be my future resolutions what they will as to this lady, the contents of the violent letter she has received, have set me at least a month forward with her. I can now talk of love and marriage, without control or restriction; her injunctions no more my terror.

In this sweetly familiar way shall we set out together for London. Mrs. Sorling's eldest daughter, at my motion, *is* to attend her in the chaise; while I ride by way of escort: for *she* is extremely apprehensive of the Singleton plot; and *has* engaged me to be all patience, if any thing should happen on the road. But nothing I am sure *will* happen: for, by a letter received just now from Joseph, I understand that James Harlowe has already laid aside his stupid project.

My beloved tells me, she shall have her clothes sent her: she hopes also her jewels, and some gold, which she left behind her.

But Joseph says clothes *only* will be sent. I will not, however tell her that : on the contrary, I say, there is no doubt but they will send *all* she wrote for. The greater her disappointment *from them*, the greater must be her dependence *on me*.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.

Wednesday afternoon, April 26.

AT length, my dearest Miss Howe, I am in London, and in my new lodgings. They are neatly furnished, and the situation, for the town, is pleasant.

But, I think you must not ask me, how I like the old gentlewoman. Yet she seems courteous and obliging. Her kinswomen just appeared to welcome me at my alighting. They seem to be genteel young women. But more of their aunt and of them, as I shall see more.

As soon as I arrived, I took possession of my apartment. I shall make good use of the light closet in it, if I stay here any time.

One of his attendants returns in the morning to the Lawn ; and I made writing to you by him, an excuse for my retiring.

* * * *

Here I was broke in upon by Mr. Lovelace ; introducing the widow leading in a kinswoman of hers to attend me, if I approved of her, till my Hannah should come, or till I had provided myself with some other servant. The widow gave her many good qualities ; but said, that she had one great defect ; which was, that she could not write, nor read writing ; that part of her education having been neglected when she was young : but for discretion, fidelity, obligingness, she was not to be outdone by anybody. She commended her likewise for her skill at the needle.

As for her *defect*, I can easily forgive that. She is very likely and genteel ; too genteel indeed, I think, for a servant. But, what I like least of all in her, she has a strange sly eye. I never saw such an eye—half-confident, I think. But indeed Mrs. Sinclair herself (for that is the widow's name,) has an odd winking eye ; and her respectfulness seems too much studied, methinks, for the London ease and freedom. But people can't help their looks, you know ; and after all, she is extremely civil and obliging. And as for the young woman, (Dorcas is her name) she will not be long with me.

I accepted her : how could I do otherwise, her aunt present, and the young woman also present : and Mr. Lovelace officious in his introducing them to oblige me ? But upon their leaving me, I told *him* (who seemed inclinable to begin a conversation with me)

that I desired that this apartment might be considered as my retirement; that when I saw him it might be in the dining-room (which is up a few stairs; for this back house, being once two, the rooms do not all of them very conveniently communicate with each other;) and that I might be as little broken in upon as possible when I am here. He withdrew very respectfully to the door; but there stopt, and asked for my company *then* in the dining-room. If he were about setting out for other lodgings, I would go with him now, I told him; but, if he did not just then go, I would first finish my letter to Miss Howe.

I see he has no mind to leave me, if he can help it. My brother's scheme may give him a pretence to try to engage me to dispense with his promise. But if I *now do*, I must acquit him of it entirely.

* * * *

I am exceedingly out of humour with Mr. Lovelace; and have great reason to be so. As you will allow, when you have read the conversation I am going to give you an account of; for he would not let me rest till I gave him my company in the dining-room.

He began with letting me know, that he had been out to inquire after the character of the widow, which was the more necessary, he said, as he supposed that I would *expect his frequent absence*.

I *did*, I said; and that he would not think of taking up his lodging in the same house with me. But what, said I, is the result of your inquiry?

Why, indeed, the widow's character was, in the main, what he liked well enough. But as it was Miss Howe's opinion, as I had told him, that my brother had not given over his scheme; as the widow lived by letting lodgings; and had others to let in the same part of the house, which might be taken by an enemy; he knew no better way than for him to take them all, as it could not be for a long time *unless I would think of removing to others*.

So far was well enough: but as it was easy for me to see, that he spoke the slighter of the widow, in order to have a pretence to lodge here himself, I asked him his intention in that respect. And he frankly owned, that if I chose to stay here, he could not, as matters stood, think of leaving me for six hours together; and he had prepared the widow to expect, that we should be here but for a few days;—only till we could fix ourselves in a house suitable to our condition; and this, that I might be under the less embarrassment, if I pleased to remove.

Fix *our*-selves in a house, and *we* and *our*, Mr. Lovelace—pray in what light?

He interrupted me—Why, my dearest life, if you will hear me

with patience—yet I am half afraid, that I have been too forward, as I have not consulted you upon it—but as my friends in town according to what Mr. Doleman has written in the letter you have seen, conclude us to be married—

Surely, sir, you have not presumed—

Hear me out, dearest creature—you have received with favour my addresses—you have made me hope for the honour of your consenting hand: yet, by declining my most fervent tender of myself to you, at Mrs. Sorlings's, have given me apprehensions of delay: If you are *known* to be mine, or if you are but *thought* to be so, there will probably be an end of your brother's contrivances. The widow's character may be as worthy *as it is said to be*. But the worthier she is, the more danger, if your brother's agent should find us out; since she may be persuaded, that she ought in conscience to take a parent's part, against a child who stands in opposition to them. But if she believes us married, her good character will stand us in stead, and she will be of our party.—Then I have taken care to give her a reason why two apartments are requisite for us at the hour of retirement.

I perfectly raved at him, I would have flung from him in resentment; but he would not let me: and what could I do? Whither go, the evening advanced?

I am astonished at you! said I.—If you are a man of honour, what need of all this strange obliquity? You delight in crooked ways—let me know, since I *must* stay in your company, (for he held my hand) let me know all you have said to the people below.—Indeed, indeed, Mr. Lovelace, you are a very unaccountable man.

My dearest creature, need I to have mentioned any thing of this? and could I not have taken up my lodgings in this house unknown to you, if I had not intended to make you the judge of all my proceedings?—But *this* is what I have told the widow before her kinswomen and before your new servant.—“That indeed we were privately married at Hertford; but that you had preliminarily bound me under a solemn vow, which I am most religiously resolved to keep, to be contented with separate apartments, and even not to lodge under same roof, till a certain reconciliation shall take place, which is of high consequence to both.” And further, that I might convince you of the purity of my intentions, and that my whole view in this was to prevent mischief, I have acquainted them, “that I have solemnly promised to behave to you before every body, as if we were only betrothed, and not married; not even offering to take any of those innocent freedoms which are not refused in the most punctilious loves.”

And then he solemnly vowed to me the strictest observance of the same respectful behaviour to me.

I said, that I was not by any means satisfied with the tale he had told, nor with the necessity he wanted to lay me under, of appearing what I was not : that every step he took was a wry one, a needless wry one : and since he thought it necessary to tell the people below any thing about me, I insisted that he should unsay all he had said, and tell them the truth.

What he had told them, he said, was with so many circumstances, that he could sooner die than contradict it. And still he insisted upon the propriety of appearing to be married, for the reasons he had given before.—

What could I say? What could I do?—I verily think, that had he urged me again, in a *proper manner*, I should have consented (little satisfied as I am with him) to give him a meeting to-morrow morning at a more solemn place than in the parlour below.

But this I resolve, that he shall not have my consent to stay a night under this roof. He has now given me a stronger reason for this determination than I had before.

* * * *

Alas! my dear, how vain a thing to say, what we will or what we will not do, when we have put ourselves into the power of this sex!—He went down to the people below, on my desiring to be left to myself; and staid till their supper was just ready; and then, desiring a moment's *audience*, as he called it, he besought my leave to stay that one night, promising to set out either for Lord M.'s or for Edgeware to his friend Belford's, in the morning, after breakfast. But if I were against it, he said he would not stay supper, and would attend me about eight next day—yet he added, that my denial would have a very particular appearance to the people below, from what he had told them; and the more, as he had actually agreed for all the vacant apartments (indeed only for a month) for the reason he before hinted at: but I need not stay here two days, if, upon conversing with the widow and her nieces in the morning, I should have any dislike to them.

I thought, notwithstanding my resolution abovementioned, that it would seem too punctilious to deny him, under the circumstances he had mentioned; I thought proper to yield *this* point: yet I was so vexed with him on the *other*, that it was impossible for me to comply with that grace which a concession should be made with, or not made at all.

This was what I said—What you *will* do, you *must* do, I think. You are very ready to promise; very ready to depart from your promise. You say, however, that you will set out to-morrow for the country. You know how ill I have been. I am not well enough now to debate with you upon your encroaching ways. I am utterly dissatisfied with the tale you have told below. Nor

will I promise to appear to the people of the house to-morrow what I am not.

He withdrew in the most respectful manner, beseeching me only to favour him with such a meeting in the morning, as might not make the widow and her nieces think he had given me reason to be offended with him.

I retired to my own apartment, and Dorcas came to me soon after to take my commands. I told her, that I required very little attendance, and always dressed and undressed myself.

As soon as she was gone, I inspected the doors, the windows, the wainscot, the dark closet as well as the light one ; and finding very good fastening to the door, and to all the windows, I had again recourse to my pen.

* * * *

Mr. Lovelace is so full of his contrivances and expedients, that I think it may not be amiss to desire you to look carefully to the seals of my letters, as I shall to those of yours. If I find him base in this particular, I shall think him capable of any evil ; and will fly him as my worst enemy.

Miss Howe to Miss Clarissa Harlowe.

Thursday night, April 27.

I CONGRATULATE you on your arrival in town, so much amended in spirits. I must be brief. I hope you'll have no cause to repent returning my Norris ; it is forthcoming on demand.

I am sorry your Hannah can't be with you. She is very ill still ; but not dangerously.

Whether you like the people or not, do not, by your noble sincerity and plain dealing, make yourself enemies. You are in the *world* now, you know.

I am glad you had thoughts of taking him at his offer, if he had re-urged it. I wonder he did not. But if he do not soon, and in such a way as you *can* accept of it, don't think of staying with him.

Depend upon it, my dear, he will not leave you either night or day, if he can help it, now he has got footing.

I should have abhorred him for his report of your marriage, had he not made it with such circumstances as leave it still in your power to keep him at distance. If once he offer at the *least* familiarity—but this is needless to say to you. He can have, I think, no other design but what he professes ; because he must needs think, that his report of being married to you must increase your vigilance.

You may depend upon my looking narrowly into the sealings

of your letters. If, as you say, he be base in that point, he will be so in every thing: but to a person of your merit, of your fortune, of your virtue, he cannot be base. The man is no fool. It is his interest, as well with regard to his expectations from his own friends, as from you, to be honest. Would to heaven, however, that you were *really* married! This is now the predominant wish of

Your

ANNA HOWE.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.

Thursday morning.

I TRIED to adjust my countenance, before I went down, to an easier air than I had a heart, and was received with the highest tokens of respect by the widow and her two nieces: agreeable young women enough in their persons; but they seemed to put on an air of reserve; while Mr. Lovelace was easy and free to all, as if he were of long acquaintance with them: gracefully enough, I cannot but say; an advantage which travelled gentlemen have over other people.

The widow, in the conversation we had after breakfast, gave us an account of the military merits of the Colonel her husband, and upon this occasion, put her handkerchief to her eyes twice or thrice. I hope for the sake of her sincerity, she wetted it, because she would be *thought* to have done so; but I saw not that she did.

Only that circumstances, and what passed in conversation, encouraged not the notion, or I should have been apt to think, that the young ladies and Mr. Lovelace were of longer acquaintance than of yesterday. For he, by stealth, as it were, cast glances sometimes at them, which they returned; and, on my ocular notice, their eyes fell, as I may say, under my eye, as if they could not stand its examination.

The widow directed all her talk to me, as to Mrs. Lovelace; and I with a very ill grace bore it. And once she expressed more forwardly than I thanked her for, her wonder that any vow, any consideration however weighty, could have force enough with so charming a couple, as she called him and me, to make us keep separate beds.

Mr. Lovelace, when the widow expressed her forward wonder, looked sly and leering, as if to observe how I took it: and said, they might take notice that his regard for my will and pleasure (calling me his dear creature) had greater force upon him than the oath by which he had bound himself.

Rebuking both him and the widow, I said, it was strange to me to hear an oath or vow so lightly treated, as to have it thought but of second consideration, whatever were the first.

The observation was just, Miss Martin said; for that nothing could excuse the breaking of a solemn vow, be the occasion of making it what it would.

We had some talk about meals, and the widow very civilly offered to conform to any rules I would set her. I told her how easily I was pleased, and how much I chose to dine by myself, and that from a plate sent me from any single dish. But I will not trouble you, my dear, with such particulars.

They thought me very singular; and with reason: but as I liked them not so *very* well, as to forego my own choice in compliment to them, I was the less concerned for what they thought.—And still the less, as Mr. Lovelace had put me very much out of humour with him.

Mr. Lovelace said, that he must let the ladies into my story, and then they would know how to allow for my ways. But *my dear, as you love me*, said the confident wretch, give as little way to melancholy as possible. Nothing but the sweetness of your temper, and your high notions of a duty that never can be deserved where you place it, can make you so uneasy as you are.—Be not angry, *my dear love*, for saying so (seeing me frown, I suppose): and snatched my hand and kissed it.—I left him with them, and retired to my closet and my pen.

Just as I have written thus far, I am interrupted by a message from him, that he is setting out on a journey, and desires to take my commands.—So here I will leave off, to give him a meeting in the dining-room.

* * * *

I was not displeased to see him in his riding-dress.

He expressed a good deal of regret at leaving me, declaring, that it was absolutely in obedience to my commands; but that he could not have consented to go, while my brother's schemes were on foot, if I had not done him the credit of my countenance in the report he had made that we were married; which, he said, had bound all the family to his interest, so that he could leave me with the greater security and satisfaction.

He hoped, that on his *return* I would name his happy day; and the rather, as I might be convinced, by my brother's projects that no reconciliation was to be expected.

I told him, that perhaps I might write one letter to my uncle Harlowe. He once loved me. I should be easier when I had made one direct application. I might possibly propose such terms, in relation to my grandfather's estate, as might procure me their

attention ; and I hoped he would be long enough a-sent to give me time to write to him, and receive an answer from him.

That, he must beg my pardon, he could not promise. He would inform himself of Singleton's and my brother's notions : and if on his return he found no reason for apprehension, he would go directly to Berks, and endeavour to bring up with him his cousin Charlotte, who, he hoped, would induce me to give him an earlier day than at present I *seemed to think of*.—I *seemed to think of*, my dear, very acquiescent, as I should imagine !

I told him, that I should take that young lady's company for a great favour.

I was the more pleased with this motion, as it came from himself, and with no ill grace.

He earnestly pressed me to accept of a bank note : but I declined it. And then he offered me his servant William for my attendant in his absence ; who, he said, might be dispatched to him if any thing extraordinary fell out. I consented to that.

He took his leave of me in the most respectful manner, only kissing my hand. He left the bank note, unobserved by me, upon the table. You may be sure I shall give it him back at his return.

I am in a much better humour with him than I was.

Your ever affectionate

CL. HARLOWE.

[*Mr. Lovelace, in his next letter to Belford triumphs on his having carried his two great points of making the lady yield to pass for his wife to the people of the house, and to his taking up his lodging in it, though but for one night. He is now, he says, in a fair way, and doubts not but that he shall soon prevail, if not by persuasion, by surprise. Yet he pretends to have some little remorse, and censures himself as acting the part of the grand tempter. But having succeeded thus far, he cannot, he says, forbear trying, according to the resolution he had before made, whether he cannot go further.*]

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.

Friday, April 28.

MR. LOVELACE is returned already. My brother's projects were his pretence. I could not but look upon this short absence as an evasion of his promise ; and angrily insisted that he should directly set out for Berkshire, in order to engage his cousin, as he had promised.

O my dearest life, said he, why will you banish me from your presence ? I cannot leave you for so long a time as you seem to expect I should. I have been hovering about town ever since I

left you. Edgeware was the furthest place I went to; and there I was not able to stay two hours, for fear, at this crisis, any thing should happen. Who can account for the workings of an apprehensive mind, when all that is dear and valuable to it is at stake? You may spare yourself the trouble of writing to any of your friends, till the solemnity has passed that shall entitle me to give weight to your application. When they know we are married, your brother's plots will be at an end; and your father and mother, and uncles, must be reconciled to you. Why then should you hesitate a moment to confirm my happiness?

He was silent. My voice failed to second the inclination I had to say something not wholly discouraging to a point so warmly pressed.

I'll tell you, my angel, resumed he, what I propose to do, if you approve of it. I will instantly go out to view some of the handsome new squares or fine streets round them, and make a report to you of any suitable house I find to be let. I will take such a one as you shall choose, and set up an equipage befitting our condition. You shall direct the whole. And on some early day, either before or after we fix, [*it must be at your own choice*] be pleased to make me the happiest of men. And then will every thing be in a desirable train. You shall receive in your own house (if it can be so soon furnished as I wish) the compliments of all my relations. Charlotte shall visit you in the interim: and if it take up time, you shall choose whom you will honour with your company, first, second, or third in the summer months; and on your return you shall find all that was wanting in your new habitation supplied; and pleasures in a constant round shall attend us. O my angel, take me to you, instead of banishing me from you, and make me yours for ever.

You see, my dear, that there was no *day* pressed for, I was not uneasy about that; and the sooner recovered myself as there was not. But, however, I gave him no reason to upbraid me for refusing his offer of going in search of a house.

He is accordingly gone out for this purpose. But I find that he intends to take up his lodgings here to-night; and if to-night, no doubt on other nights, while he is in town.

Saturday morning.

HE has made his inquiries, and actually seen the house he was told of last night. The owner of it is a young widow lady; who is inconsolable for the death of her husband; *Fretchville* her name. It is furnished quite in taste, every thing being new within these six months. He believes, if I like not the furniture, the use of it may be agreed for, with the house, for a time certain: but, if I like it, he will endeavour to take the one and purchase the other directly.

The lady sees nobody; nor are the best apartments above-stairs to be viewed till she is either absent or gone into the country; which she talks of doing in a fortnight or three weeks at the furthest; and to live there retired.

He now does nothing but talk of the *ceremony*; but not indeed of the *day*. I don't want him to urge that—but I wonder he does not.

He was very earnest with me to give him, and four of his friends, my company on Monday evening, at a little collation. Miss Martin and Miss Horton, cannot, he says, be there, being engaged in a party of their own with two daughters of Colonel Solcombe, and two nieces of Sir Antony Holmes, upon an annual occasion. But Mrs. Sinclair will be present, and she gave him hope of the company of a young lady of very great fortune and merit, (Miss *Partington*) an heiress, to whom Colonel Sinclair, it seems, in his lifetime was guardian, and who therefore calls Mrs. Sinclair mamma.

I desired to be excused.

When he is set upon any thing, there is no knowing, as I have said heretofore, what one *can* do. But I will not, if I can help it, be made a show of; especially to men of whose characters and principles I have no good opinion. I am, my dearest friend,

Your ever affectionate

CL. HARLOWE.

[*Mr. Lovelace in his next letter gives an account of his quick return: of his reasons to the lady for it: of her displeasure upon it: and of her urging his absence from the safety she was in from the situation of the house, except she were to be traced out by his visits.*]

[*He mentions his different proposals in relation to the ceremony which he so earnestly pressed for; and owns his artful intention in avoiding to name the day.*]

AND now, says he, I hope soon to have an opportunity to begin my operations; since all is *halcyon* and security.

Mowbray, Belton, and Tourville, long to see my angel, and will be here. She has *refused* me; but *must be present* notwithstanding. And then will I shew thee the pride and glory of the Harlowe family, my implacable enemies; and thou shalt join with me in my triumph over them all.

I know not what may still be the perverse beauty's fate; I want thee therefore to see and admire her, while she is serene and full of hopes: before her apprehensions are realized, if realized they are to be; and if evil apprehensions of me she really has: before

her beamy eyes have lost their lustre : while yet her charming face is surrounded with all its virgin glories ; and before the plough of disappointment has thrown up furrows of distress upon every lovely feature.

Ye must be sure to let it sink deep into your heavy heads, that there is no such lady in the world as Miss Clarissa Harlowe ; and that she is neither more nor less than Mrs. Lovelace, though at present, to my shame be it spoken, a virgin.

Be mindful also, that your old mother's name, after that of *her* mother when a maid, is Sinclair : that her husband was a lieutenant-colonel, and all that *you*, Belford, know from honest Doleman's letter of her,* that let your brethren know.

Priscilla Partington (for her looks so innocent, and discretion so deep, yet seemingly so softly) may be greatly relied upon. She will accompany the mother, gorgeously dressed with all her Jew's extravagance flaming out upon her ; and first, *induce*, then *countenance* the lady. She has her cue, and I hope will make her acquaintance coveted by my charmer.

Miss Partington's history is this : the daughter of Colonel Sinclair's brother-in-law : that brother-in-law may have been a Turkey merchant, or any merchant, who died confoundedly rich : the colonel one of her guardians ; whence she always calls Mrs. Sinclair *mamma*, though not succeeding to the trust.

She is just come to pass a day or two, and then to return to her surviving guardian's at Barnet.

Be it principally thy part, Jack, who art a parading fellow, and aimest at wisdom, to keep thy brother-varlets from blundering ; for, as thou must have observed from what I have written, we have the most watchful and most penetrating lady in the world to deal with : a lady worth deceiving ! but whose eyes will pierce to the bottom of your shallow souls the moment she hears you open. Do thou therefore place thyself between Mowbray and Tourville : their toes to be played upon and commanded by thine, if they go wrong : thy elbows to be the ministers of approbation.

Sunday.

HAVE been at church, Jack—behaved admirably well too ! My charmer is pleased with me now : for I was exceedingly attentive to the discourse, and very ready in the auditor's part of the service.—Eyes did not much wander. How could they, when the loveliest object, infinitely the loveliest in the whole church was in my view.

But let me tell thee what passed between us in my first visit of this morning ; and then I will acquaint thee more largely with my good behaviour at church.

* See p. 117, et seq.

I could not be admitted till after eight. I found her ready prepared to go out.

Going abroad, madam?—with an air of indifference.

Yes, sir; I intend to go to church.

I hope, madam, I shall have the honour to attend you.

No! she designed to take a chair, and go to the next church.

This startled me: a chair to carry her to the next church from Mrs. Sinclair's, her right name not Sinclair, and to bring her back hither in the face of people who might not think well of the house!—there was no permitting that. Yet I was to appear indifferent. But said, I should take it for a favor, if she would permit me to attend her in a coach, as there was time for it, to St. Paul's.

She made objections to the gaiety of my dress: and told me, that if she went to St. Paul's, she could go in a coach without *me*.

I objected Singleton and her brother, and offered to dress in the plainest suit I had.

I beg the favour of attending you, dear madam, said I. I have not been at church a great while: we shall sit in different stalls: and the next time I go, I hope it will be to give myself a title to the greatest blessing I can receive.

She made some further objections: but at last permitted me the honour of attending her.

I got myself placed in her eye, that the time might not seem tedious to me; for we were there early. And I gained her good opinion, as I mentioned above, by my behaviour.

When we came home we talked upon the subject: and this I did in such a grave way, that she seemed more and more pleased with me; I have no doubt that I shall get her to favour me to-morrow night with her company at my collation.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.

Monday night, May 1.

I HAVE just escaped from the very disagreeable company I was obliged, so much against my will, to be in. As a very particular relation of this evening's conversation would be painful to me, you must content yourself with what you shall be able to collect from the outlines, as I may call them, of the characters of the persons; assisted by the little histories Mr. Lovelace gave me of each yesterday.

The names of the gentlemen are Belton, Mowbray, Tourville, and Belford. These four, with Mrs. Sinclair, Miss Partington the great heiress, mentioned in my last, Mr. Lovelace, and myself, made up the company.

I gave you before, the favourable side of Miss Partington's

character, such as it was given me by Mrs. Sinclair, and her nieces I will now add a few words from my own observation upon her behaviour in *this* company.

In *better* company perhaps she would have appeared to less disadvantage: but, notwithstanding her *innocent looks*, which Mr. Lovelace also highly praised, he is the last person whose judgment I would take upon real modesty. For I observed, that, upon some talk from the gentlemen, not free enough to be openly censured, yet too indecent in its implication to come from well-bred persons, in the company of virtuous people, this young lady was very ready to apprehend; and yet, by smiles and simperings, to encourage, rather than discourage, the culpable freedoms of persons, who, in what they went out of their way to say, must either be guilty of absurdity, meaning *nothing*; or meaning *something* of rudeness.

How little soever matters in general may be to our liking, we are apt, when hope is strong enough to permit it, to endeavour to make the best we can of the lot we have drawn; and I could not but observe often, how much Mr. Lovelace excelled all his four friends in every thing they seemed desirous to excel in. But, as to wit and vivacity, he had no equal there. All the others gave up to him, when his lips began to open. The haughty Mowbray would call upon the prating Tourville for silence, and would elbow the supercilious Belton into attention, when Lovelace was going to speak. And when he had spoken the words, Charming fellow! with a free word of admiration or envy, fell from every mouth.

One compliment passed from Mr. Belford to Mr. Lovelace, which hastened my quitting the shocking company.—“You are a happy man, Mr. Lovelace,” said he, upon some fine speeches made him by Mrs. Sinclair, and assented to by Miss Partington: ‘you have so much courage and so much wit, that neither man nor woman can stand before you.’”

Mr. Belford looked at me when he spoke: yes, my dear, he smilingly looked at me: and he looked upon his complimented friend: and all their *assenting*, and therefore *affronting* eyes, both men’s and women’s, were turned upon your Clarissa: at least, my self-reproaching heart made me think so; for that would hardly permit my eye to look up.

Oh! my dear, were but a woman, who gives reason to the world to think her to be in love with a man, to reflect one moment on the exultation she gives *him*, and the disgrace she brings upon *herself*; the low pity, the silent contempt, the insolent sneers and whispers, to which she makes herself obnoxious from a censuring world of both sexes; how would she despise herself! and how much more eligible would she think death itself than such a discovered debasement.

What I have thus in general touched upon, will account to you, why I could not more particularly relate what passed in this evening's conversation: which, as may be gathered from what I have written, abounded with *approbatory* accusations, and *supposed* witty retorts.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.

Tuesday, May 2.

WITH infinite regret I am obliged to tell you, that I can write no longer to you, or receive letters from you. Your mother has sent me a letter inclosed in a cover to Mr. Lovelace, directed for him at Lord M.'s, (and which was brought him just now) reproaching me on this subject in very angry terms, and forbidding me "as I would not be thought to intend to make her and you unhappy, to write to you without her leave."

This, therefore, is the last you must receive from me till happier days: and as my prospects are not very bad, I presume we shall soon have leave to write again; and even to see each other; since an alliance with a family so honourable as Mr. Lovelace's is, will not be a disgrace.

Your ever obliged and affectionate,

CL. HARLOWE.

Miss Howe to Miss Clarissa Harlowe.

Wedn., May 3

I AM astonished that my mother should take such a step—purely to exercise an unreasonable act of authority; and to oblige the most remorseless hearts in the world. If I find that I can be of use to you either by advice or information, do you think I will not give it?—Were it to any person, much *less* dear to me than you are, do you think, in such a case, I would forbear giving it?

This I will come into if it will make you easy—I will forbear to write to *you* for a few days, if nothing extraordinary happen, and till the rigour of her prohibition is abated. But be assured, that I will not dispense with your writing to *me*. My heart, my conscience, my honour will not permit it.

But how will I help myself?—How!—easily enough. For I do assure you, that I want but very little further provocation to fly privately to London. And if I do, I will not leave you till I see you either honourably married, or absolutely quit of the wretch and in this last case, I will take you down with me, in defiance of

the whole world ; or, if you refuse to go with me, stay with you and accompany you as your shadow withersoever you go.

Write therefore, or take the consequence.

Your most affectionate

ANNA HOWE.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.

Thursday, May 4.

I FOREGO every other engagement, I suspend every wish, I banish every other fear, to take up my pen, to beg of you, that you will not think of being *guilty* of such an act of love as I can never thank you for ; but must for ever regret. If I *must* continue to write to you, I must. I know full well your impatience of control, when you have the least imagination that your generosity or friendship is likely to be wounded by it.

My dearest, dearest creature, would you incur a maternal, as I have a paternal, malediction ? Would not the world think there was an infection in my fault, if it were to be followed by Miss Howe ? There are some points so flagrantly wrong, that they will not bear to be argued upon. This is one of them.

Learn, my dear, I beseech you learn, to subdue your own passions. Be the motives what they will, excess is excess. Those passions in our sex, which we take no pains to subdue, may have one and the same source with those infinitely blacker passions, which we used so often to condemn in the violent and headstrong of the other sex, and which may be only heightened in them by *custom*, and their *free education*. Let us both, my dear, ponder well this thought ; look into ourselves, and fear.

My trembling writing will shew you, my dear, impetuous creature, what a trembling heart you have given to

Your ever obliged,

Or, if you take so rash a step,

Your for ever disobliged,

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Mr. Hickman to Miss Clarissa Harlowe.

[Sent to Wilson's by a particular hand.]

MADAM,

Friday, May 5.

I HAVE the honour of dear Miss Howe's commands, to acquaint you, without knowing the occasion, that she is excessively concerned for the concern she has given you in her last letter : and

that, if you will but write to her, under cover as before, she will have no thoughts of what you are so very apprehensive about.— Yet she bid me write, “ That if she has but the *least* imagination that she can *serve* you, and *save* you,” those are her words, “ all the censures of the world will be but of second consideration with her.” I have great temptations on this occasion to express my own resentments upon your present state ; but not being fully apprized of what that is—only conjecturing from the disturbance upon the mind of the dearest lady in the world to me, and the most sincere of friends to you, that *that* is not altogether so happy as were to be wished ; and being, moreover, forbid to enter into the cruel subject, I can only offer, *as I do*, my best and faithfullest services ! and wish you a happy deliverance from all your troubles.

For I am,

Most excellent young lady,

Your faithful and most obedient servant,

CH. HICKMAN.

Mr. Belford to Robert Lovelace, Esq.

Edgeware, Tuesday night, May 2

WITHOUT staying for the promised letter from you to inform us what the lady says of *us*, I write to tell you, that we are all of one opinion with regard to *her* ; which is, that there is not of her age a finer woman in the world, as to her understanding. As for her person, she is at the age of bloom, and an admirable creature ; a perfect beauty ; but this *poorer* praise, a man, who has been honoured with her conversation, can hardly descend to give.

Permit me, dear Lovelace, to be a means of saving this excellent creature from the dangers she hourly runs from the most plotting heart in the world. In a former, I pleaded your own family, Lord M.'s wishes particularly ; and then I had not seen her : but now I join *her* sake, *honour's* sake, motives of justice, generosity, gratitude, and humanity, which are all concerned in the preservation of so fine a woman. Thou knowest not the anguish I should have had had I not known before I set out this morning, that the incomparable creature had disappointed thee in thy cursed view of getting to admit the specious Partington for a bed-fellow.

You may think what I am going to write too flighty ; but, by my faith, I have conceived such a profound reverence for her sense and judgment, that far from thinking the man excusable who should treat her basely, I am ready to regret that such an angel of a woman should even marry. She is in my eye all mind ; and were she to meet with a man all mind likewise, why should the

charming qualities she is mistress of, be endangered? Why should such an angel be plunged so low as into the vulgar offices of domestic life? Were she mine, I should hardly wish to see her a mother, unless there were a kind of moral certainty, that minds like hers could be propagated. For why, in short, should not the work of bodies be left to *mere* bodies? I know, that you yourself have an opinion of her little less exalted. Belton, Mowbray, Tourville, are all of my mind; are full of her praises; and swear it would be a million of pities to ruin a woman, in whose fall none but devils can rejoice.

What must that merit and excellence be, which can extort this from *us*, free livers like yourself, and all of us your partial friends, who have joined with you in your just resentments against the rest of her family, and offered our assistance to execute your vengeance on them? But we cannot think it reasonable, that you should punish an innocent creature, who loves you so well, and who is in your protection, and has suffered so much for you, for the faults of her relations.

Be honest and marry; and be thankful that she will condescend to have thee. If thou dost not, thou wilt be the worst of men; and wilt be condemned in this world and the next: as I am sure thou oughtest, and shouldst too, wert thou to be judged by one, who never before was so much touched in a woman's favour, and whom thou knowest to be

Thy partial friend,
J. BELFORD.

Our companions consented that I should withdraw to write to the above effect. They can make nothing of the characters we write in; so I read this to them. They approve of it; and of their own motion each man would set his name to it. I would not delay sending it, for fear of some detestable scheme taking place.

THOMAS BELTON,
RICHARD MOWBRAY,
JAMES TOURVILLE.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

Wednesday, May 3.

WHEN I have already taken pains to acquaint thee in full with regard to my views, designs, and resolutions with regard to this admirable woman, it is very extraordinary, that thou shouldst vapour as thou dost in her behalf, when I have made no trial, no attempt; and yet givest it as thy opinion in a former letter, that

advantage *may be* taken of the situation she is in ; and that she *may be* overcome.

Were I to take thy stupid advice, and marry ; what a figure should I make in rakish annals ! The lady in my power ; yet not having *intended* to put herself in my power ; declaring against love, and a rebel to it : so much open-eyed caution : no confidence in my honour ; her family expecting the worst *hath* passed ; herself seeming to expect, that the worst will be attempted : What ! wouldst thou not have me act in character ?

No doubt of it, as thou sayest, the devils would rejoice in the fall of such a woman. But this is my confidence, that I shall have it in my power to marry when I will. And if I do her this *justice*, shall I not have a claim to her *gratitude* ? And will she not think herself the obliged, rather than the obliger ? Then let me tell thee, Belford, it is impossible so far to hurt the *morals of this lady*, as thou and thy brother varlets have hurt others of the sex, who are now casting about the town firebrands and double death. Take ye that thistle to mumble upon.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.

Mr. LOVELACE is extremely sunk in my opinion since Monday night : nor see I before me any thing that can afford me a pleasing hope. For what, with a mind so *unequal as his*, can be my *best* hope ?

I think I mentioned to you in my former, that my clothes were brought me. You fluttered me so, that I am not sure I did. But I know I designed to mention that they were. They were brought me on Thursday ; but neither my few guineas with them, nor any of my books, except a *Drexelius on Eternity*, the good old *Practice of Piety*, and a *Francis Spira*. My brother's wit, I suppose. He thinks he does well to point out death and despair to me. I wish for the one, and every now-and-then am on the brink of the other.

You will the less wonder at my being so very solemn, when, added to the above, and to my uncertain situation, I tell you, that they have sent me with these books a letter from my cousin Morden. It has set my heart against Mr. Lovelace. Against myself too. I send it inclosed.

* * * *

I will suppose my dear Miss Howe, that you have read my cousin's letter. It is now in vain to wish it had come sooner. But if it *had*, I might perhaps have been so rash as to give Mr. Lovelace the *fatal meeting*, as I little thought of going away with him.

But I should hardly have given him the *expectation* of so doing *previous* to the meeting, which made him come prepared; and the revocation of which he so artfully made ineffectual.

Persecuted as I was, and little expecting so much condescension, as my aunt, to my great mortification, has told me, (and you confirm) I should have met with, it is, however, hard to say what I should or should not have done as to *meeting him*, had it come in time: but this effect I verily believe it would have had—to have made me insist with all my might on going over, out of all their ways, to the kind writer of the instructive letter, and on making a father (a protector, as well as a friend) of a kinsman, who is one of my trustees. This, circumstanced as I was, would have been a natural, at least an unexceptionable protection.—But I *was to be* unhappy! And how it cuts me to the heart, to think that I can already subscribe to my cousin's character of a libertine, so well drawn in the letter which I suppose you now to have read!

That a man of a character which ever was my abhorrence should fall to my lot!—But, depending on my own strength; having no reason to apprehend danger from headstrong and disgraceful impulses; I too little perhaps cast up my eyes to the supreme Director: in whom, mistrusting myself, I ought to have placed my whole confidence—and the more, when I saw myself so perseveringly addressed by a man of this character.

But how I stray again; stray from my intention; I would only have said, that I had begun a letter to my cousin Morden some time ago; but that now I can never end it. You will believe I cannot: for how shall I tell him that all his compliments are misbestowed? That all his advice is thrown away? All his warnings vain? And that even my highest expectation is to be the wife of that free liver, whom he so pathetically warns me to shun?

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.

Sunday night, May 7.

WHEN you reflect upon my unhappy situation, which is attended with so many indelicate and even shocking circumstances, some of which my pride will not let me think of with patience; all aggravated by the contents of my cousin's affecting letter; you will not wonder that the vapourishness which has laid hold of my heart should rise to my pen.

* * * *

Now, my dear, I cannot bear the life I live. I would be glad at my heart to be out of his reach. If I were, he should soon *find the difference*. If I must be humbled, it had better be by

those to whom I owe duty, than by him. You tell me, that, upon enquiry you find that, had I not been unhappily seduced away, a change of measures was actually resolved upon; and that my mother, particularly, was determined to exert herself for the restoration of the family peace; and, in order to succeed the better, had thoughts of trying to engage my uncle Harlowe in her party.

Let me build on these foundations. I can but try, my dear. It is my duty to try all *probable* methods to restore the poor outcast to favour. And who knows but that once indulgent uncle, who has very great weight in the family, may be induced to interpose in my behalf? I will give up all right and title to my grandfather's devises and bequests, with all my heart and soul, to whom they please, in order to make my proposal palatable to my brother. And that my surrender may be effectual, I will engage never to marry.

What think you, my dear, of this expedient? Surely they cannot resolve to renounce me for ever. If they look with impartial eyes upon what has happened, they will have something to blame *themselves* for, as well as *me*.

I presume, that you will be of opinion that this expedient is worth trying. But here is my difficulty: if I should write, my hard-hearted brother has so strongly confederated them all against me, that my letter would be handed about from one to another, till he had hardened every one to refuse my request; whereas, could my uncle be engaged to espouse my cause, as from *himself*, I should have some hope; as I presume to think he would soon have my mother and my aunt of his party.

What, therefore, I am thinking of, is this—"Suppose Mr. Hickman, whose good character has gained him every body's respect, should put himself in my uncle Harlowe's way? And (as if from your knowledge of the state of things between Mr. Lovelace and me) assure him not only of the above particular, but that I am under no obligations that shall hinder me from taking his directions?"

I submit the whole to your discretion, whether to pursue it at all, or in what manner. But if it *be* pursued, and if my uncle refuses to interest himself in my favour upon Mr. Hickman's application as from you (for so, for obvious reasons, it must be put) I can then have no hope; and my next step, in the mind I am in, shall be to throw myself into the protection of the ladies of his family.

The lady dates again on Monday, to let Miss Howe know, that Mr. Lovelace, on observing her uneasiness, had introduced to her Mr. Mennell, Mrs. Fretchville's kinsman who managed all her affairs. She calls him a young officer of sense and

politeness, who gave her an account of the house and furniture, to the same effect that Mr. Lovelace had done before, as also of the melancholy way Mrs. Fretchville is in.

She tells Miss Howe how extremely urgent Mr. Lovelace was with the gentleman, to get Mrs. Lovelace (as he now always calls her before company) a sight of the house; and that Mr. Mennell undertook that very afternoon to shew her all of it, except the apartment Mrs. Fretchville should be in when she went. But that she chose not to take another step till she knew how she approved of her scheme to have her uncle sounded, and with what success, if tried, it would be attended.

Mr. Lovelace, in his humourous way, gives his friend an account of the lady's peevishness and dejection, on receiving a letter with her clothes. He regrets that he has lost her confidence; which he attributes to his bringing her into the company of his four companions. Yet he thinks he must excuse them, and censure her for over-niceness; for that he never saw men behave better, at least not them.

Mentioning his introducing Mr. Mennell to her.

Now, Jack, says he, was it not very kind of Mr. Mennell [Captain Mennell I sometimes called him;] to come along with me so readily as he did, to satisfy my beloved about the vapourish lady and the house?

But who is Capt. Mennell? methinks thou askest: I never heard of such a man as Captain Mennell.

Very likely. But knowest thou not young Newcomb, honest Doleman's nephew?

O-ho! It is he?

It is. And I have changed his name by virtue of my own single authority.

But Mennell, now he has seen this angel of a woman, has qualms! that's the devil!—I shall have enough to do to keep him right. But it is the less wonder that he should stagger, when a few hours conversation with the same lady could make four much more hardened varlets find hearts—only, that I am confident that I shall at last reward her virtue, if her virtue overcome me, or I should find it impossible to persevere—for at times I have confounded qualms myself. But say not a word of them to the confraternity: nor laugh at me for them thyself.

In another letter, dated Monday night, he writes as follows:

This perverse lady keeps me at such a distance, that I am sure

something is going on between her and Miss Howe, notwithstanding the prohibition from Mrs. Howe, to both : and as I have thought it some degree of merit in myself to punish others for their transgressions, I am of opinion that both these girls are punishable for their breach of parental injunctions. And as to their letter-carrier, I have been inquiring into his way of living ; and finding him to be a common poacher, a deer-stealer, and warren-robber, who, under pretence of higgling, deals with a set of customers who constantly take all he brings, whether fish, fowl, or venison, I hold myself justified (since Wilson's conveyance must at present be sacred) to have him stripped and robbed, and what money he has about him given to the poor ; since, if I take not money as well as letters, I shall be suspected.

But, on second thoughts, if I could find out that the dear creature carried any of her letters in her pockets, I can get her to a play or to a concert, and she may have the misfortune to lose her pockets.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

Tuesday, May 9.

I AM a very unhappy man. This lady is said to be one of the sweetest tempered creatures in the world : and so I thought her. But to *me* she is one of the most perverse. I never was supposed to be an ill-natured mortal neither. How can it be ? I imagined for a long while that we were born to make each other happy : but quite the contrary ; we really seem to be sent to plague each other.

But I will lead to the occasion of this preamble.

I had been out. On my return, meeting Dorcas on the stairs—Your lady in her chamber, Dorcas ? In the dining-room, sir and if ever you hope for an opportunity to come at a letter, it must be now. For at her feet I saw one lie, which, as may be seen by its open folds, she has been reading, with a little parcel of others she is now busied with—all pulled out of her pocket, as I believe so, sir, you'll know where to find them another time.

I was ready to leap for joy, and instantly resolved to bring forward an expedient which I had held in petto ; and entering into the dining-room with an air of transport, I boldly clasped my arms about her, as she sat ; she huddling up her papers in her handkerchief all the time ; the dropped paper unseen. O my dearest life, a lucky expedient have Mr. Mennell and I hit upon just now. In order to hasten Mrs. Fretchville to quit the house, I have agreed, if you approve of it, to entertain her cook, her house-maid, and two men-servants, (about whom she was very solicitous) till you

are provided to your mind. And that no accommodations may be wanted, I have consented to take the household linen at an appraisement.

I am to pay down five hundred pounds, and the remainder as soon as the bills can be looked up, and the amount of them adjusted. Thus will you have a charming house entirely ready to receive you. Some of the ladies of my family will soon be with you: they will not permit you long to suspend my happy day. And that nothing may be wanting to gratify your utmost punctilio, I will till then consent to stay here at Mrs. Sinclair's, while you reside at your new house: and leave the rest to your own generosity. O my beloved creature, will not this be agreeable to you? I am sure it will—it must—and clasping her closer to me, I gave her a more fervent kiss than ever I had dared to give her before. I permitted not my ardour to overcome my discretion however; for I took care to set my foot upon the letter, and scraped it further from her, as it were behind her chair.

She was in a passion at the liberty I took. Bowing low, I begged her pardon; and stooping still lower, in the same moment, took up the letter, and whipt it into my bosom.

Pox on me for a puppy, a fool, a blockhead, a clumsy varlet, a mere Jack Belford!—I thought myself a much cleverer fellow than I am!—Why could I not have been followed in by Dorcas, who might have taken it up while I addressed her lady?

For here, the letter being unfolded, I could not put it in my bosom, without alarming her ears, as my sudden motion did her eyes.—Up she flew in a moment: Traitor! Judas! her eyes flashing lightning, and a perturbation in her eager countenance so charming!—What have you taken up?—And then, what for both my ears I durst not have done to her, she made no scruple to seize the stolen letter, though in my bosom.

When she had got it in her possession, she flew to the door I threw myself in her way, shut it, and, in the humblest manner besought her to forgive me. And yet do you think the Harlowe-hearted charmer would forgive me?—No truly; but pushing me rudely from the door, as if I had been nothing, she gaining that force through passion which I had lost through fear, out she shot to her own apartment [thank my stars she could fly no further!], and as soon as she entered it, in a passion still, she double-locked and double-bolted herself in. This my comfort, on reflection, that upon a greater offence it cannot be worse.

But thinkest thou that I will not make it the subject of one of my first plots to inform myself of the reason why all this commotion was necessary on so slight an occasion as this would have been, were not the letters that pass between these ladies of a treasonable nature.

Wednesday Morning.

No admission to breakfast, any more than to supper. I wish this lady is not a simpleton, after all.

I must keep a good look-out. She is not now afraid of her brother's plot. I shan't be at all surprised, if Singleton calls upon Miss Howe as the only person who *knows*, or is *likely to know*, where Miss Harlowe is; pretending to have affairs of importance, and of particular service to her, if he can but be admitted to her speech—of compromise, who knows, from her brother?

Then will Miss Howe warn her to keep close. Then will my protection be again necessary. This will do, I believe. Any thing from Miss Howe must.

Miss Howe to Miss Clarissa Harlowe.

Wednesday, May 10.

I MUCH approve of your resolution to leave this wretch, if you can make up with your uncle.

I hate the man—most heartily do I hate him, for his teasing ways. The very reading of your account of them teases me almost as much as they can you. May you have encouragement to fly the foolish wretch!

I have other reasons to wish you may: for I have just made an acquaintance with one who knows a vast deal of his private history. The man is really a villain, my dear! an execrable one! if all be true that I have heard! and yet I am promised other particulars. I do assure you, my dear friend, that, had he a dozen lives, he might have forfeited them all, and been dead *twenty crimes* ago.

I will have your uncle sounded, as you desire, and that immediately. But yet I am afraid of the success, and this for several reasons. 'Tis hard to say what the sacrifice of your estate would do with some people: and yet I must not, when it comes to the test, permit you to make it.

I am sorry to tell you, that I have reason to think that your brother has not laid aside his foolish plot. A sun-burnt, sailor-looking fellow was with me just now, pretending great service to you from Captain Singleton, could he be admitted to your speech. I pleaded ignorance as to the place of your abode. The fellow was too well instructed for me to get any thing out of him.

I wept for two hours incessantly on reading yours, which inclosed that from your cousin Morden.* My dearest creature do not desert yourself. Let your Anna Howe obey the call of that

*See Letter p. 142.

friendship which has united us as one soul, and endeavour to give you consolation.

Sunday, May 14.

How it is now, my dear, between you and Mr. Lovelace, I cannot tell. But wicked as the man is, I am afraid he must be your lord and master.

* * * *

By the time you have read to this place, you will have no doubt of what has been the issue of the conference between the *two gentlemen*. I am equally shocked and enraged against them all. Against them *all*, I say; for I have tried your good Norton's weight with your mother (though at first I did not intend to tell you so) to the same purpose as the gentleman sounded your uncle. Never were there such determined brutes in the world! Why should I mince the matter? Yet would I fain methinks make an exception for your mother.

Your uncle will have it that you are ruined. "He can believe every thing bad of a creature, he says, who could run away with a man; with such a one especially as Lovelace. They *expected* applications from you, when some heavy distress had fallen upon you. But they are all resolved not to stir an inch in your favour; no, not to save your life!"

You were accused "of premeditation and contrivance in your escape." Instead of pitying *you*, the mediating person was called upon "to pity *them*"; who once, your uncle said, deoted upon you; who took no joy but in your presence; who devoured your words as you spoke them; who trod over again your footsteps, as you walked before them."—And I know not what of this sort.

Upon the whole, it is now evident to me, and so it must be to you, when you read this letter, that you must be his. And the sooner you are so, the better. Shall we suppose that marriage is not in your power?—I cannot have patience to suppose that.

Adieu, my dearest friend.

ANNA HOWE.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.

Monday afternoon, May 15.

NOW indeed it is evident, my best, my only friend that I have but one choice to make. And now do I find that I have carried my resentment against this man too far; since now I am to appear as if under an obligation to his patience with me for a conduct, which perhaps he will think plainly demonstrative of my little esteem of him; of but a *secondary* esteem at least, where before, his pride rather than his merit, had made him expect a

first. O my dear! to be cast upon a man that is not a *generous* man; that is indeed a *cruel* man! A man that is capable of creating a distress to a young creature, who by her evil destiny is thrown into his power, and then of *enjoying* it as I may say! [I verily think I may say so, of this savage!]
—What a fate is mine!

Tuesday, May 16.

I THINK, once more, we seem to be in a kind of train but through a storm. I will give you the particulars.

I heard him in the dining-room at five in the morning. I had rested very ill, and was up too. But opened not my door till six: when Dorcas brought me his request for my company.

He approached me, and taking my hand, as I entered the dining-room, I went not to bed, madam, till two, said he: yet slept not a wink. For God's sake, torment me not, as you have done for a week past.

He paused. I was silent.

At first, proceeded he, I thought your resentment of a curiosity, in which I had been disappointed, could not be deep; and that it would go off of itself: but when I found it was to be kept up till you knew the success of some new overtures which you had made, and which, complied with, might have deprived me of you forever; how, madam, could I support myself under the thoughts of having, with such an union of interests, made so little impression upon your mind in my favour.

He paused again. I was silent. He went on.

I acknowledge that I have a *proud heart*, madam. I cannot but hope for some instances of previous and preferable favour from the lady I am ambitious to call mine: and that her choice of me should not appear, not *flagrantly* appear, directed by the perverseness of her selfish persecutors, who are my irreconcilable enemies.

More to the same purpose, he said. You know, my dear, the room he had given me to recriminate upon him in twenty instances. I did not spare him.

Such a passion as yours, Mr. Lovelace, *deserves* to be narrowed and confined. It is either the passion *you* do not think it, or *I* do not. I question whether your mind is capable of being *so* narrowed and *so* widened, as is necessary to make it be what I wish it to be. Lift up your hands and your eyes, sir, in silent wonder, if you please; but what does that wonder express, what does it convince me of, but that we are not born for one another?

By my soul, said he, and grasped my hand with an eagerness that hurt it, we *were* born for one another: you *must* be mine—you *shall* be mine [and put his other arm round me] although my *damnation were* to be the purchase!

I was still more terrified—Let me leave you, Mr. Lovelace, said I; or do you be gone from me. Is the passion you boast of to be thus shockingly demonstrated?

You must not go, madam!—You must not leave me in anger—

I will return—I will return—when you can be less violent—less shocking.

And he let me go.

The man quite frightened me; insomuch, that when I got into my chamber, I found a sudden flow of tears a great relief to me.

In half an hour, he sent a little billet, expressing his concern for the vehemence of his behaviour, and entreating to see me.

I went. Because I could not help myself, I went.

He was full of his excuses—O my dear, what would you, even you, do with such a man as this; and in my situation?

It was very possible for him now, he said, to account for the workings of a beginning phrensy. For his part, he was near distraction. All last week to suffer as he had suffered; and now to talk of *civil regards*, only, when he had hoped from the nobleness of my mind—

Hope what you will, interrupted I, I must insist upon it, that our minds are by no means suited to each other. You have brought me into difficulties. I am deserted by every friend but Miss Howe. My true sentiments I will not conceal—it is against my will that I must submit to owe protection from a brother's projects, which Miss Howe thinks are not given over, to you, who have brought me into these straits: *not* with my own concurrence brought me into them; remember that—

I do remember that, madam!—so often reminded, how can I forget it?

Yet I *will* owe to you this protection, if it be necessary, in the earnest hope that you will *shun*, rather than *seek* mischief, if any further inquiry after me be made. But what hinders you from leaving me?—Cannot I send to you? The widow Fretchville, it is plain, knows not her own mind: the people here indeed are more civil to me every day than other: but I had rather have lodgings more agreeable to my circumstances. I best know what will suit them; and am resolved not to be obliged to any body. If you leave me, I will privately retire to some one of the neighbouring villages, and there wait my cousin Morden's arrival with patience.

I presume, madam, replied he, from what you have said, that your application to Harlowe Place has proved unsuccessful: I therefore hope that you will now give me leave to mention the terms in the nature of settlements, which I have long intended to propose to you: and which having till now delayed to do, through accidents not proceeding from myself, I had thoughts of urging

to you *the moment you entered upon your new house* ; and upon your finding yourself as independent in *appearance*, as you are in *fact*. Permit me, madam, to propose these matters to you—not with an expectation of your *immediate answer* ; but for your *consideration*.

Were not hesitation, a self-felt glow, a downcast eye, encouragement more than enough ? And yet you will observe (as I now do on recollection) that he was in no great hurry to solicit for a *day* ; since he had no thoughts of proposing settlements till I had got into my new house ; and now, in his great complaisance to me, he desired leave to propose his terms, not with an expectation of my *immediate answer* ; but for my *consideration* only—yet, my dear, your advice was too much in my head at this time. I hesitated.

He urged on upon my silence : he would call God to witness to the justice, nay to the *generosity* of his intentions to me, if I would be so good as to hear what he had to propose to me, as to settlements.

I have no spirits, just now, sir, to attend to such weighty points. What you have a mind to propose, write to me : and I shall know what answer to return.

He *looked* as if he would choose rather to speak than to write : but had he *said* so, I had a severe return to have made upon him ; as possibly he might see by *my* looks.

* * * *

In this way are we now : a sort of calm, as I said, succeeding a storm. What may happen next, whether a storm or a calm, with such a spirit as I have to deal with, who can tell ?

Tuesday night, May 16.

MR. LOVELACE has sent me, by Dorcas, his proposals, as follow :

“To spare a delicacy so extreme, and to obey you, I write : and the rather, that you may communicate this paper to Miss Howe, who may consult any of her friends you shall think proper to have intrusted on this occasion. I say, *intrusted* ; because, as you know, I have given it out to several persons, that we are actually married.

“In the first place, madam, I offer to settle upon you, by way of jointure, your whole estate : and moreover to vest in trustees such a part of mine in Lancashire, as shall produce a clear four hundred pounds a-year, to be paid to your sole and separate use quarterly.

“My own estate is a clear, not nominal, 2000*l. per annum*, Lord M. proposes to give me possession either of that which he has in Lancashire, or that we call *the Lawn*, in Hertfordshire

upon my nuptials with a lady whom he so greatly admires ; and to make that I shall choose a clear 1000*l. per annum.*

“ If, as your own estate is at present in your father’s hands, you rather choose that I should make a jointure out of mine, tantamount to yours, be it what it will, it shall be done. I will engage Lord M. to write to *you* what he proposes to do on the happy occasion : not as your desire or expectation, but to demonstrate that no advantage is intended to be taken of the situation you are in with your own family.

“ To shew the beloved daughter the consideration I have for her, I will consent that she shall prescribe the terms of agreement in relation to the large sums which must be in her father’s hands, arising from her grandfather’s estate. I have no doubt but he will be put upon making large demands upon you. All those it shall be in your power to comply with, for the sake of your own peace. And the remainder shall be paid into your hands, and be entirely at your disposal, as a fund to support those charitable donations which I have heard you so famed for *out of* your family , and for which you have been so greatly reflected upon *in* it.

“ As to clothes, jewels, and the like, against the time you shall choose to make your appearance, it will be my pride, that you shall not be beholden for such of these as shall be answerable to the rank of both to those who have had the stupid folly to renounce a daughter they deserved not. You must excuse me, madam : you would mistrust my sincerity in the rest, could I speak of these people with less asperity, though so nearly related to you.

These, madam, are my proposals.

“ I will only add, that if I have omitted any thing that would have given you further satisfaction ; or if the above terms be short of what you would wish ; you will be pleased to supply them as you think fit. And when I know your pleasure, I will instantly order articles to be drawn up conformably, that nothing in my power may be wanting to make you happy.

“ You will now, dearest madam, judge how far all the rest depends upon yourself.”

You see, my dear, what he offers. You see it is all my fault that he has not made these offers before, I am a strange creature ! —To be to blame in *every thing*, and to *every body* ; yet neither intend the ill at the time, nor know it to *be* the ill till too late, or so nearly too late, that I must give up all the delicacy he talks of, to compound for my fault !

• I shall now judge how far the rest depends upon myself !
So coldly concludes he such warm, and, in the main, unobjectionable proposals : would you not, as you read, have supposed that the **power** would conclude with the most earnest demand of a day !

--I own, I had that expectation so strong, resulting *naturally*, as I may say, from the premises, that without *studying* for dissatisfaction, I could not help being dissatisfied when I came to the conclusion.

But you say there is no help. I must perhaps make *further* sacrifices. All delicacy it seems is to be at an end with me!—But if so, this man knows not what every *wise* man knows, that prudence, and virtue, and delicacy of mind in a *wife*, do the husband more real honour in the eye of the world than the same qualities (were *she* destitute of them) in *himself*, do him: as the *want* of them in her does him more *dishonour*: for are not the wife's errors the husband's reproach? How *justly* his reproach is another thing.

I will consider this paper; and write to it, if I am able: for it seems now, *all the rest depends upon myself*.

Wednesday morning, May 17.

MR. LOVELACE would fain have engaged me last night. But as I was not prepared to enter upon the subject of his proposals, (intending to consider them maturely) and was not highly pleased with his conclusion, I desired to be excused seeing him till morning; and the rather, as there is hardly any getting from him in tolerable time over night.

Accordingly, about seven o'clock we met in the dining-room.

I find he was full of expectation that I should meet him with a very favourable, who knows but with a *thankful* aspect? And I immediately found by his fallen countenance, that he was under no small disappointment that I did not.

My dearest love, are you well? Why look you so solemn upon me? Will your indifference never be over? If I have proposed terms in any respect *short* of your expectation—

I told him, that he had very considerably mentioned my shewing his proposals to Miss Howe; and as I should have a speedy opportunity to send them to her by Collins, I desired to suspend any talk upon that subject till I had her opinion upon them.

Good God!—If there were but the least loophole! the least room for delay!—But he was writing a letter to Lord M. to give him an account of his situation with me, and could not finish it so satisfactorily, either to my lord or to himself, as if I would condescend to say whether the terms he had proposed were acceptable or not.

Thus far, I told him, I could say, that my principal point was peace and reconciliation with my relations. As to other matters, the gentleness of his own spirit would put him upon doing more for me than I should ask, or expect. Wherefore, if all he had to write about was to know what Lord M. would do on my account.

he might spare himself the trouble ; for that my utmost wishes, as to myself, were much more easily gratified than he perhaps imagined.

He asked me then, if I would so far permit him to touch upon the happy day, as to request the presence of Lord M. on the occasion, and to be my father ?

Father had a sweet and venerable sound with it, I said I should be glad to have a father who would own me !

Was not this plain speaking, think you, my dear ? Yet it rather, I must own, appears so to me on reflection, than was *designed* freely at the time. For I then, with a sigh, from the bottom of my heart, thought of my *own father* ; bitterly regretting, that I am an outcast from him and from my mother.

Mr Lovelace, I thought, seemed a little affected at the *manner* of my speaking, and perhaps at the sad reflection.

He hesitated, as if contending with himself ; and after taking a turn or two about the room, he was at a great loss what to determine upon, he said, because he had not the honour of knowing when he was to be made the happiest of men—would to God it might that very instant be resolved upon !

He stopped a moment or two, staring in his usual confident way, in my downcast face. But if he could not, so *soon* as he wished, procure my consent to a day ; in *that* case he thought the compliment might *as well be* made to Lord M. as *not*—[*see my dear !*] Since the settlements might be drawn and engrossed in the intervenient time, which would pacify his impatience, *as no time would be lost*.

You will suppose how *I* was affected by this speech, by repeating the substance of what *he* said upon it ; as follows.

—But, by his soul, he knew not, so much was I upon the reserve, and so much latent meaning did my eye import, whether, when he most hoped to please me, he was not furthest from doing so. Would I vouchsafe to say, whether I approved of his compliment to Lord M. or not ?

To leave it to *me* to choose whether the speedy day he ought to have urged for with earnestness should be accelerated or suspended !—Miss Howe, thought I, at that moment, says I must *not* run away from this man !

To be sure, Mr. Lovelace, if this matter be *ever to be*, it must be agreeable to me to have the full approbation of *one* side, since I cannot have that of the *other*.

If this matter be ever to be ! Good God ! what words are these at this time of day ! And full *approbation* of *one* side ? Why that word *approbation* ? when the greatest pride of all my family is, that of having the honour of so dear a creature for their relation. Would to heaven. my dearest life, added he, that, with

out complimenting *any* body, to-morrow might be the happiest day of my life!—What say you, my angel? With a trembling impatience, that *seemed* not affected—What say you for *to-morrow*?

It was likely, my dear, I could say much to it, or name another day, had I been disposed to the latter, with such an *hinted delay from him*.

I was silent.

Next day, madam, if not to-morrow?

Had he given me *time* to answer, it could not have been in the affirmative, you must think—but *in the same breath*, he went on—or the *day after that*?—And taking both my hands in his, he stared me into a half-confusion—would *you* have had patience with him, my dear?

No, no, said I, as calmly as possible, you cannot think that I should imagine there can be reason for such a hurry. It will be most agreeable, to be sure, for my lord to be present.

I am all obedience and resignation, returned the wretch, with a self-pluming air, as if he had acquiesced to a proposal *made by me*, and had complimented me with a great piece of *self-denial*.

Is it not plain, my dear, that he designs to vex and tease me? Proud, yet mean, and foolish man, if so!—But you say all punctilio is at an end with me. Why, why, will he take pains to make a heart wrap itself up in reserve, that wishes only, and that for his sake, as well as my own, to observe due decorum?

But when he would have *rewarded himself*, as he had heretofore called it, for this self-supposed concession, with a kiss, I repulsed him with a just and very sincere disdain.

He seemed both vexed and surprised, as one who had made the most agreeable proposals and concessions, and thought them ungratefully returned. He plainly said, that he thought our situation would intitle him to such an innocent freedom: and he was both amazed and grieved to be thus scornfully repulsed.

No reply could be made by me on such a subject. I abruptly broke from him. I recollect, as I passed by one of the pier-glasses, that I saw in it his clenched hand offered in wrath to his forehead: the words *indifference, by his soul, next to hatred*, I heard him speak; and something of *ice* he mentioned; I heard not what.

Miss Howe to Miss Clarissa Harlowe.

Thursday, May 18.

I HAVE neither time nor patience, my dear friend, to answer every material article in your last letters just now received. Mr

Lovelace's proposals are all I like of him. And yet (as you do) I think that he concludes them not with that warmth and earnestness which we might naturally have expected from him. Never in my life did I hear or read of so patient a man, with such a blessing in his reach.

I will endeavour to think of some method, of some scheme to get you from him, and to fix you safely somewhere till your cousin Morden arrives—a scheme to lie by you, and to be pursued as occasion may be given. You are sure that you can go abroad when you please? and that our correspondence is safe? I cannot, however (for the reasons heretofore mentioned respecting your own reputation) wish you to leave him while he gives you not cause to suspect his honour. But your heart I know would be the easier, if you were sure of some asylum in case of necessity.

Yet once more, I say I can have no notion that he can or dare to mean you dishonour. But then the man is a fool, my dear—that's all.

However since you are thrown upon a fool, marry the fool, at the first opportunity; and though I doubt that this man will be the most ungovernable of fools, as all witty and vain fools are, take him as a punishment, since you cannot as a reward: in short, as one given to convince you that there is nothing but imperfection in this life.

And what is the result of all I have written, but this? Either marry, my dear, or get from them all, and from him too.

Your ever affectionate

ANNA HOWE.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

Saturday, May 20.

Now will I favour thee with a brief account of our present situation.

From the highest to the lowest we are all extremely happy.—*Dorcas* stands well in her lady's graces. *Polly* has asked her advice in relation to a courtship affair of her own. No oracle ever gave better. *Sally* has had a quarrel with her woollen-drapeer: and made my charmer lady-chancellor in it. She blamed Sally for behaving tyrannically to a man who loves her. Dear creature! to stand against a glass, and to shu' her eyes because she will not see her face in it!—Mrs. *Sinclair* has paid her court to so unerring a judge, by requesting her advice with regard to both nieces.

This is the way we have been in for several days with the people below. Yet *sola* generally at her meals, and seldom at other times in their company. They now, used to her ways, never press

her : so when they meet all is civility on both sides. Even married people, I believe, Jack, prevent abundance of quarrels, by seeing one another *but seldom*.

But how stands it between thyself and the lady, methinks thou askest, since her abrupt departure from thee, and undutiful repulse of Wednesday morning?

Why, pretty well in the main. Nay, *very* well. For why? The dear saucy-face knows not how to help herself. Can fly to no other protection. And has, besides, overheard a conversation [who would have thought she had been so near?] which passed between Mrs. Sinclair, Miss Martin, and myself, that very Wednesday afternoon, which has set her heart at ease with respect to several doubtful points.

Such as, particularly, "Mrs. Fretchville's unhappy state of mind—most humanely pitied by Miss Martin, who knows her very well—the husband she has lost, and herself (as Sally says) lovers from their cradles. Pity from one begets pity from another, be the occasion for it either strong or weak ; and so many circumstances were given to poor Mrs. Fretchville's distress, that it was impossible but my beloved must *extremely* pity *her* whom the less tender-hearted Miss Martin *greatly* pitied.

"My Lord M.'s gout his only hindrance from visiting my spouse. Lady Betty and Miss Montague soon expected in town.

"My earnest desire is signified to have my spouse receive those ladies in her own house, if Mrs. Fretchville would but know her own mind ; and I pathetically lamented the delay occasioned by her not knowing it.

"My intention to stay at Mrs. Sinclair's, *as I said I had told them before*, while my spouse resides in her own house, (when Mrs. Fretchville could be brought to quit it) in order to gratify her utmost punctilio.

"My passion for my beloved (which, as I told them in a high and fervent accent, was the truest that man could have for woman) I boasted of. It was, in short, I said, of the *true Platonic kind*, or I had no notion of what Platonic love was."

So it is, Jack ; and must end as Platonic love generally does end.

"Sally and Mrs. Sinclair next praised, *but not grossly*, my beloved. Sally particularly admired her purity ; called it exemplary ; yet (to avoid suspicion) expressed her thoughts that she was *rather over-nice*, if she might presume to say so *before me*. But, nevertheless, she applauded me for the strict observation I made of my vow.

"I more freely blamed her reserves to me ; called her cruel, inveighed against her relations ; doubted her love. Every favour I asked of her denied me. Yet my behaviour to her as pure and

delicate when alone as when before them—hinted at something that had passed between us that very day, that shewed her indifference to me in so strong a light, that I could not bear it. But that I would ask her for her company to the play of *Venice Preserved*, given out for Saturday night as a benefit play; the prime actors to be in it; and this to see if I were to be denied every favour.

"I asked Sally to oblige my fair one with her company.

* * * *

Thursday we were very happy. All the morning *extremely* happy. I kissed her charming hand—*fifty* times kissed her hand, I believe—once her cheek, intending her lip, but so rapturously, that she could not help seeming angry.

Thursday morning as I said, we were extremely happy—about *noon*, she numbered the hours she had been with me; all of them to me but as one minute; and desired to be left to herself. I was loth to comply: but observing the sunshine begin to shut in, I yielded.

I dined out. Returning, I talked of the house, and of Mrs. Fretchville—had seen Mennel—had pressed him to get the widow to quit. She pitied Mrs. Fretchville [another good effect of the overheard conversation]—had written to Lord M.; expected an answer soon from him. I was admitted to sup with her. I urged for her approbation or correction of my written terms. She again promised an answer as soon as she heard from Miss Howe.

Then I pressed for her company to the play on Saturday night. She made objections, as I had foreseen: her brother's projects, warmth of the weather, &c. But in such a manner, as if half afraid to disoblige me [another happy effect of the overheard conversation.] I soon got over these therefore; and she consented to favour me.

Friday passed as the day before.

Here were two happy days to both. Why cannot I make every day equally happy? it looks *as if it were in my power to do so*. Strange, I should thus delight in teasing a woman, I so dearly love! I must, I doubt, have something in my temper like Miss Howe, who loves to plague the man who puts himself in her power.—

Saturday is half-over. We are equally happy—Preparing for the play. Polly has offered her company, and is accepted. I have directed her where to weep: and this not only to shew her humanity, [a weeping eye indicates a gentle heart] but to have a pretence to hide her face with her fan or handkerchief.—Yet Polly is far from being every man's girl; and we shall sit in the gallery green box.

The woes of others, so well represented as those of Belvidera

particularly will be, must, I hope, unlock and open my charmer's heart. Whenever I have been able to prevail upon a girl to permit me to attend her to a play, I have thought myself sure of her.

Indeed, I have no hope of such an effect here; but I have more than one end to answer by getting her to a play. To name but one—Dorcas has a *master-key*, as I have told thee—But it were worth while to carry her to the play of *Venice Preserved*, were it but to shew her, that there have been, and may be, much deeper distresses than she can possibly know.

Thus exceedingly happy are we at present. I hope we shall not find any of Nat. Lee's left-handed gods at work, to dash our bowl of joy with wormwood.

R. LOVELACE.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.

Friday, May 19.

She gives the particulars of the conversation which she had overheard between Mr. Lovelace, Mrs. Sinclair, and Miss Martin; but accounts more minutely than he had done for the opportunity she had of overhearing it unknown to them.

She gives the reasons she has to be pleased with what she heard from each; but is shocked at the measure he is resolved to take, if he misses her but for one day. Yet is pleased that he proposes to avoid aggressive violence, if her brother and he meet in town.

I THINK myself obliged, from what passed between Mr. Lovelace and me on Wednesday, and from what I overheard him say, to consent to go with him to the play; and the rather, as he had the discretion to propose one of the nieces to accompany me.

I cannot but acknowledge that I am pleased to find that he has actually written to Lord M.

I have promised to give Mr. Lovelace an answer to his proposals as soon as I have heard from you, my dear, on the subject.

I think it will not be amiss, notwithstanding the present favourable appearances, that you should perfect the scheme (whatever it be) which you tell me you have thought of, in order to procure for me an asylum, in case of necessity. Mr. Lovelace is certainly a deep and dangerous man; and it is therefore but prudence to be watchful, and to be provided against the worst. Lord bless me, my dear, how am I reduced!—Could I ever have thought to be in such a situation, as to be obliged to stay with a man, of whose honour by me I could have but the *shadow* of a doubt!—but I will look forward, and hope the best.

I am certain that your letters are safe. Be perfectly easy there fore on that head.

Mr. Lovelace will never be out of my company by his good will. otherwise I have no doubt that I am mistress of my goings-out and comings-in ; and did I think it needful, and were I not afraid of my brother and Captain Singleton, I would oftener put it to trial.

Miss Howe to Miss Clarissa Harlowe.

Saturday, May 20.

I DID not know, my dear, that you deferred giving an answer to Mr. Lovelace's proposals till you had my opinion of them. A particular hand, occasionally going to town, will leave this at Wilson's, that no delay may be made on that account.

I never had any doubt of the man's justice and generosity in matters of settlement : and all his relations are as noble in their spirit as in their descent : but *now*, it may not be amiss for you to wait, to see what returns my lord makes to his letter of invitation.

The scheme I think of is this :

There is a person, whom I believe you have seen with me : her name is Townsend, who is a great dealer in Indian silks, Brussels and French laces, cambrics, linen, and other valuable goods : which she has a way of coming at, duty-free ; and has a great vend for them (and for other curiosities which she imports) in the private families of the gentry round us.

She has her days of being in town, and then is at a chamber she rents at an inn in Southwark, where she keeps patterns of all her silks, and much of her portable goods, for the conveniency of her London customers. But her place of residence, and where she has her principal warehouse, is at Deptford, for the opportunity of getting her goods on shore.

Mrs. Townsend and I, though I have not yet had dealings with her, are upon a very good foot of understanding. She is a sensible woman ; she has been abroad, and often goes abroad in the way of her business, and gives very entertaining accounts of all she has seen. And having applied to me, to recommend her to you, (as it is her view to be known to young ladies who are likely to change their condition) I am sure I can engage her to give you protection at her house at Deptford : which, she says, is a populous village ; and one of the last, I should think, in which you would be sought for. She is not much there, you will believe by the course of her dealings, but, no doubt, must have somebody on the spot, in whom she can confide ; and there, perhaps, you might be safe, till your cousin comes. And I should not think it amiss that you write

to him immediately. I cannot suggest to you *what* you should write. That must be left to your own discretion. For you will be afraid, no doubt, of the consequence of a variance between the two men.

Mrs. Townsend, as I have recollected, has two brothers, each a master of a vessel; and who knows, as she and they have concerns together, but that, in of case need, you may have a whole ship's crew at your devotion? If Lovelace give you cause to leave him, take no thought for the people at Harlowe Place. Let *them* take care of one another. It is a care they they are *used* to. The law will help to secure *them*. The wretch is no assassin, no night-murderer. He is an *open*, because a *fearless* enemy; and should he attempt any thing that would make him obnoxious to the laws of society, you might have a fair riddance of him either by flight or the gallows: no matter which.

Your own

ANNA HOWE.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

Sunday, May 21.

I AM too much disturbed in my mind to think of any thing but revenge; or I did intend to give thee an account of Miss Harlowe's observations on the play. *Miss Harlowe's* I say. Thou knowest that I hate the name of *Harlowe*; and I am exceedingly out of humour with her, and with her saucy friend.

What's the matter *now*? thou'lt ask.

Matter enough; for while we were at the play, Dorcas, who had her orders, and a key to her lady's chamber, as well as a master-key to her drawers and mahogany chest, closet-key and all, found means to come at some of Miss Howe's last written letters.

Dorcas no sooner found them, than she assembled three ready writers of the *non-apparents*; and *Sally* and *she*, and *they*, employed themselves with the utmost diligence in making extracts, according to former directions, from these cursed letters, for my use. *Cursed*, I may well call them—such abuses! such virulence!—O this little fury Miss Howe!—Well might her saucy friend (who has been equally free with me, or the occasion could not have been given) be so violent as she lately was, at my endeavouring to come at one of these letters.

Thou mayest go on with thy preachments, and Lord M. with his wisdom of nations, I am now more assured of her than ever. And now my revenge is up, and joined with my love, all resistance must fall before it. And most solemnly do I swear that Miss Howe shall *come in for her snack*.

And here, just now, is another letter brought from the same little virulent devil. I hope to procure transcripts from that too, very speedily, if it be put to the test; for the saucy fair one is resolved to go to church this morning; not so much from a spirit of devotion, I have reason to think, as to try whether she can go out without check, control, or my attendance.

* * * *

She is gone. Slipped down before I was aware. She had ordered a chair, on purpose to exclude my personal attendance. But I had taken proper precautions. Will attended her by consent; Peter, the house servant was within Will's call.

I had, by Dorcas, represented her danger from Singleton, in order to dissuade her from going at all, unless she allowed me to attend her; but I was answered, with her usual saucy smartness, that if there were no cause of fear of being met with at the play-house, when there were but two play-houses, surely there was less at church, when there were so *many* churches. The chairmen were ordered to carry her to St. James's church.

* * * *

I have come at the letter brought her from Miss Howe to-day. Plot, conjuration, sorcery, witchcraft, all going forward! I shall not be able to see this *Miss Harlowe* with patience.

* * * *

She is returned; but refuses to admit me: and insists upon having the day to herself. Dorcas tells me that she believes her denial is from motives of piety—oons, Jack, is there impiety in seeing me!—Would it not be the highest act of piety to reclaim me? and is this to be done by her refusing to see me, when she is in a devouter frame than usual?—But I hate her, hate her heartily! She is old, ugly, and deformed.—But O the blasphemy! Yet she is an Harlowe; and I do and *can* hate her for that.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.

Sunday Morning, seven o'clock.

I WAS at the play last night with Mr. Lovelace and Miss Horton. It is, you know, a deep and most affecting tragedy in the reading.

His behaviour, on this occasion, and on our return, was unexceptionable; only that he would oblige me to stay to supper with the women below, when we came back, and to sit up with him and them till near one o'clock this morning. I am not very sorry to have the pretence; for I love to pass the Sundays by myself.

To have the better excuse to avoid his teasing, I am ready dressed to go to church this morning. I will go only to St. James's

church, and in a *chair*; that I may be sure I can go out and come in when I please, without being intruded upon by him, as I was twice before.

Near nine o'clock.

I HAVE your kind letter of yesterday. He knows I have. And I shall expect that he will be inquisitive next time I see him after your opinion of his proposals. I doubted not your approbation of them, and had written an answer on that presumption; which is ready for him. He must *study* for occasions of procrastination, and to disoblige me, if now any thing happens to set us at variance again.

* * * *

He has just sent me word, that he insists upon supping with me. As we had been in a good train for several days past, I thought it not prudent to break with him for little matters. Yet, to be, in a manner, threatened into his will, I know not how to bear that.

Treatment I gave him! A wretch! Yet perhaps he has nothing new to say to me. I shall be very angry with him.

Sunday night.

ON my entering the dining-room, he took my hand in his in such a humour, as I saw plainly he was resolved to quarrel with me—and for what?—*What had I done to him?*—I never in my life beheld in any body such wild, such angry, such impatient airs. I was terrified; and instead of being as angry as I intended to be, I was forced to be all mildness. I can hardly remember what were his first words, I was so frightened. But, *You hate me, madam! You hate me, madam!* were some of them—with such a fierceness—I wished myself a thousand miles distant from him. I hate nobody, said I; I thank God, I hate nobody—you terrify me, Mr. Lovelace—let me leave you.—The man, my dear, looked *quite ugly*—I never saw a man so ugly as passion made him look—and for what?—And he so grasped my hands!—Fierce creature!—He so grasped my hands! In short, he seemed by his looks and by his words, (once putting his arms about me) to wish me to provoke him. So that I had nothing to do but to beg of him (which I did repeatedly) to permit me to withdraw: and to promise to meet him at his own time in the morning.

It was with a very ill grace that he complied, on that condition: and at parting he kissed my hand with such a savageness, that a redness remains upon it still.

I was so disgusted with him, as well as frightened by him, that, on my return to my chamber, in a of passionate despair, I tore almost in two the answer I had written to his proposals.

I will see him in the morning, because I promised I would

But I will go out, and that without him, or any attendant. If he account not tolerably for his sudden change of behaviour, and a proper opportunity offer of a private lodging in some creditable house, I will not any more return to this :—at present I think so. —And there will I either attend the perfecting of your scheme ; or, by your epistolary mediation, make my own terms with the wretch ; since it is your opinion that I must be his, and cannot help myself : or, perhaps, take a resolution to throw myself at once into Lady Betty's protection ; and this will hinder him from making his insolently-threatened visit to Harlowe Place.

Your

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq

Monday morning, May 22.

No generosity in this lady. None at all. Wouldst thou not have thought, that after I had permitted her to withdraw, primed for mischief as I was, she would meet me next morning early ; and that with a smile ; making me one of her best courtesies ?

I was in the dining-room before six, expecting her. She opened not her door. I went up stairs and down ; and hemmed ; and called Will ; called Dorcas ; threw the doors hard to ; but still she opened not her door. Thus till half an hour after eight fooled I away my time ; and then (breakfast ready) I sent Dorcas to request her company.

But I was astonished, when (following the wench, as she did at the first invitation) I saw her enter dressed, all her gloves, and those and her fan in her hand : in the same moment bidding Dorcas direct Will to get a chair to the door.

Going abroad, madam ?

I am, sir.

I looked cursed silly, I am sure. You will breakfast first, I hope, madam ; in a very humble strain : yet with a hundred tender-hooks in my heart.

Had she given me more notice of her intention, I had perhaps wrought myself up to the frame I was in the day before, and begun my vengeance. And immediately came into my head all the virulence that had been transcribed for me from Miss Howe's letters, and in that letter which I had transcribed myself.

Yes, she would drink one dish ; and then laid her gloves and fan in the window, just by.

I was perfectly disconcerted. I hemmed and was going to speak several times ; but I knew not in what key.

At last, I *will* begin, thought I.

She a dish—I a dish.

Sip, her eyes her own, she ; like an haughty and imperious sovereign, conscious of dignity, every look a favour.

Sip, like her vassal, I : lips and hands trembling, and not knowing that I sipped or tasted.

I was—I was—I sip'd—(drawing in my breath and the liquor together, though I scalded my mouth with it) I was in hopes, madam—

Dorcas came in just then.—Dorcas, said she, is a chair gone for ?

William is gone for one, madam.

This cost me a minute's silence before I could begin again. And then it was with my hopes, and my hopes, and my hopes, that I should have been early admitted to—

What weather is it, Dorcas ? said she, as regardless of me as if I had not been present.

A little lowering, madam—the sun is gone in—it was very fine half an hour ago.

I had no patience. Up I rose. Down went the tea-cup, saucer and all—Confound the weather, the sunshine, and the wench !—Begone for a devil, when I am speaking to your lady, and have so little opportunity given me.

Up rose the saucy-face, half frightened ; and snatched from the window her gloves and fan.

You must not go, madam ;—Seizing her hand—By my soul you must not—

Must not, sir !—But I must—you can curse your maid in my absence as well as if I were present—except—except—you intend for *me* what you direct to *her*.

Dearest creature, you must not go—you must not leave me—such determined scorn ! such contempts !—Questions asked your servant of no meaning but to break in upon me—I cannot bear it !

Detain me not, struggling. I will not be withheld. I like you not, nor your ways. You sought to quarrel with me yesterday, *for no reason in the world that I can think of but because I was too obliging*. You are an ungrateful man ; and I hate you with my whole heart, Mr. Lovelace.

Do not make me desperate, madam. Permit me to say, that you shall not leave me in this humour. Wherever you go I will attend you. Had Miss Howe been my friend, I had not been thus treated. It is but too plain to whom my difficulties are owing. I have long observed, that every letter you received from *her* makes an alteration in your behavior to *me*. She would have you treat *me* as *she* treats Mr. Hickman, I suppose ; but neither does that treatment become your admirable temper to offer nor me to receive.

This startled her. She did not care to have me think hardly of Miss Howe.

But recollecting herself, Miss Howe, said she, is a friend to virtue and to good men, If she like not you, it is because you are not one of those.

She would have flung from me: I will *not* be detained, Mr. Lovelace. I *will* go out.

Indeed you must not, madam, in this humour. And I placed myself between her and the door.—And then, fanning, she threw herself into a chair, her sweet face all crimsoned over with passion.

I cast myself at her feet. Begone, Mr. Lovelace, said she, with a rejecting motion, her fan in her hand; for your own sake leave me!—My soul is above thee, man! with both her hands pushing me from her!—Urge me not to tell thee how sincerely I think my soul above thee!—Thou hast in mine, a proud, a too proud heart, to contend with!—Leave me, and leave me for ever!—Thou hast a proud heart to contend with!—

Her air, her manner, her voice, were bewitchingly noble, though her words were so severe.

Let me worship an angel, said I, no woman. Forgive me, dearest creature!—Creature if you be, forgive me!—Forgive my inadvertencies; Forgive my inequalities!—Pity my infirmities!—Who is equal to my Clarissa?

I trembled between admiration and love; and wrapt my arms about her knees as she sat. She tried to rise at the moment; but my clasping round her thus ardently, drew her down again; and never was woman more affrighted. But, free as my clasping emotion might appear to her apprehensive heart, I had not at that instant any thought but what reverence inspired. And till she had actually withdrawn [which I permitted under promise of a speedy return, and on her consent to dismiss the chair] all the motions of my heart were as pure as her own.

She kept not her word. An hour I waited before I sent to claim her promise. She could not possibly see me yet, was her answer. As soon as she could she would.

Monday evening.

AT my repeated request she condescended to meet me in the dining-room to afternoon-tea and not before.

She entered with bashfulness, as I thought; in a pretty confusion, for having carried her apprehensions too far. Sullen and slow moved she towards the tea-table.—Dorcas present, busy in tea-cup preparations. I took her reluctant hand, and pressed it to my lips—Dearest, loveliest of creatures, why this distance? Why this displeasure? How can you thus torture the faithfullest heart in the world?

She disengaged her hand. Again I would have snatched it.

Be quiet, peevishly withdrawing it. And down she sat; a gentle palpitation in the beauty of beauties indicating mingled sullenness and resentment; her snowy handkerchief rising and falling, and a sweet flush overspreading her charming cheeks.

For God's sake, madam;—and a third time I would have taken her repulsing hand.

And for the same sake, sir; no more teasing.

Dorcas retired: I drew my chair nearer hers, and with the most respectful tenderness took her hand; and told her, that I could not forbear to express my apprehensions (from the distance she was so desirous to keep me at) that if any man in the world was more *indifferent* to her, to use no harsher a word, than another, it was the unhappy wretch before her.

She looked steadily upon me for a moment, and with her other hand, not withdrawing that I held, pulled her handkerchief out of her pocket; and by a twinkling motion urged forward a tear or two, which, having arisen in each sweet eye, it was plain by that motion she would rather have dissipated: but answered me only with a sigh and an averted face.

I urged her to speak; to look up at me; to bless me with an eye more favourable.

I had reason, she told me, for my complaint of her indifference. She saw nothing in my mind that was generous. I was not a man to be obliged or favoured. My strange behaviour to her since Saturday night, *for no cause at all that she knew of*, convinced her of this. Whatever hopes she had conceived of me were utterly dissipated: all my ways were disgustful to her.

This cut me to the heart. The guilty, I believe, in every case, less patiently bear the detecting truth, than the innocent do the degrading falsehood.

O Mr. Lovelace, she continued, we have been long enough together to be tired of each other's humours and ways; ways and humours so different, that perhaps you ought to dislike *me* as much as I do *you*.—I think, I think, that I cannot make an answerable return to the value you profess for me. My temper is utterly ruined, you have given me an ill-opinion of all mankind; of yourself in particular; and withal so bad a one of myself, that I shall never be able to look up, having utterly and for ever lost all that self-complacency, and conscious pride, which are so necessary to carry a woman through this life with tolerable satisfaction to herself.

She paused, I was silent. By my soul, thought I, this sweet creature will at last undo me!

She proceeded.—What now remains, but that you pronounce

me free of all obligation to you? And that you hinder me not from pursuing the destiny that shall be allotted me?

She was proceeding—My dearest life, said I, I have been all this time, though you fill me with doubts of your favour, busy in the nuptial preparations. I am actually in treaty for equipage.

Equipage, sir!—Trappings, tinsel!—What is equipage; what is life; what is anything; to a creature sunk so low as I am in my own opinion! Labouring under a father's curse!—Unable to look backward without self-reproach, or forward without terror!—These reflections strengthened by every cross accident!—And what but cross accidents befall me!—All my darling schemes dashed in pieces, all my hopes at an end; deny me not the liberty to refuge myself in some obscure corner, where neither the enemies you have made me, nor the few friends you have left me, may ever hear of the supposed rash one, till those happy moments are at hand, which shall expiate for all!

I had not a word to say for myself. Such a war in my mind had I never known. Gratitude, and admiration of the excellent creature before me, combating with villainous habit, with resolutions so premeditatedly made, and with views so much gloried in!—An hundred new contrivances in my head, and in my heart, that to be honest, as it is called, must all be given up, by a heart delighting in intrigue and difficulty—Miss Howe's virulences endeavoured to be recollected—yet recollection refusing to bring them forward with the requisite efficacy—I had certainly been a lost man, had not Dorcas come seasonably in, with a letter.—On the superscription written.—*Be pleased, sir, to open it now.*

I retired to the window—opened it—it was from Dorcas herself.—These the contents—"Be pleased to detain my lady: a paper of importance to transcribe. I will cough when I have done."

I put the paper in my pocket, and turned to my charmer, less disconcerted, as she, by that time, had also a little recovered herself.—One favour, dearest creature—let me but know whether Miss Howe approves or disapproves of my proposals?—I know her to be my enemy.—I was intending to account to you for the change of behaviour you accused me of at the beginning of the conversation, but was diverted from it by your vehemence.

Curse upon the heart of the little devil, said I, who instigates you to think so hardly of the faithfullest heart in the world!

How dare you, sir! And there she stopped, having almost overshot herself; as I designed she should.

How dare I *what*, madam? And I looked with meaning. How dare I *what*?

Vile man!—And do you—and there again she stopt.

Do I *what*, madam?—And why *vile* man?

How dare you curse *any body* in my presence?

O the sweet receder ! But that was not to go off so with a Lovelace.

Why then, dearest creature, is there *any body* that instigates you ?—If there be, again I curse them, be they whom they will.

She was in a charming pretty passion. And this was the first time that I had the odds in my favour.

Well, madam, it is just as I thought. And now I know how to account for a temper that I hope not *natural* to you.

Artful wretch ! And is it thus you would entrap me ? But know, sir, that I receive letters from nobody but Miss Howe. Miss Howe likes some of your ways as little as I do ; for I have set every thing before her. Yet she is thus far *your* enemy as she is mine : she thinks I should not refuse your offers ; but endeavour to make the best of my lot. And now you have the truth. Would to heaven you were capable of dealing with equal sincerity !

I *am*, madam. And here on my knee, I renew my vows, and my supplication, that you will make me yours. Yours for ever. And let me have cause to bless you and Miss Howe in the same breath.

Rise, sir, from your too-ready knees ; and mock me not.

Mock you, madam ! And I arose, and re-urged her for the day. I blamed myself at the same time for the invitation I had given to Lord M. as it might subject me to delay from his infirmities : but told her, that I would write to him to excuse me, if she had no objection ; or to give him the day she would give me, and not wait for him, if he could not come in time.

My day, sir, said she, is never. Be not surprised. A person of politeness, judging between us, would not be surprised that I say so. But, indeed, Mr Lovelace [and wept through impatience] you either know not how to treat with a mind of the least degree of delicacy, notwithstanding your birth and education, or you are an ingrateful man ; and [after a pause] a *worse* than an ingrateful one. But I will retire. I will see you again to-morrow. I cannot before. I think I hate you. You *may* look. Indeed I think I hate you. And if, upon a re-examination of my own heart, I find I do, I would not for the world that matters should go on further between us.

Dorcas came in as soon as her lady had retired, and gave me the copy she had taken. And what should it be of but the answer the truly-admirable creature had intended to give to my written proposals in relation to settlements ?

I have but just dipped into this affecting paper. Were I to read it attentively, not a wink should I sleep this night. To-morrow it shall obtain my serious consideration.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

Tuesday morning, May 23.

THE dear creature desires to be excused seeing me till the evening. She is not very well, as Dorcas tells me.

Read here, if thou wilt, the paper transcribed by Dorcas. It is impossible that I should proceed with my projects against this admirable woman, were it not that I am resolved, after a few trials more, if as nobly sustained as those she has already passed through to make her (if she really hate me not) legally mine.

“ TO MR. LOVELACE.

“ WHEN a woman is married, that supreme earthly obligation requires that in all instances where her husband's real honour is concerned she should yield her own will to his. But, beforehand, I could be glad, conformably to what I have already signified, to have the most explicit assurances, that every possible way should be tried to avoid litigation with my father. Time and patience will subdue all things.

“ This article, I urge to your most serious consideration, as what lies next my heart. I enter not here minutely into the fatal misunderstanding between my family and you : the fault may be in both. But, sir, *yours* was the foundation-fault : at least, you gave a too plausible pretence for my brother's antipathy to work upon. Condescension was no part of your study. You chose to bear the imputations laid to your charge, rather than to make it your endeavour to obviate them.

“ But this may lead into hateful recrimination—let it be remembered, I will only say, in this place, that in *their* eye, you have robbed them of a daughter they doated upon : and that their resentments on this occasion rise but in proportion to their love, and their disappointment.

“ As for *myself*, sir, I must leave it [so seems it to be destined to your justice, to treat me as you shall think I deserve : but if your future behaviour to *them* is not governed by that harsh-sounding implacableness, which you charge upon some of *their* tempers, the splendour of your family, and the excellent character of *some* of them, will, on better consideration, do every thing with them : for they *may* be overcome ; perhaps, however, with the more difficulty, as the greatly prosperous less bear controul and disappointment than others : for I will own to you, that I have often in secret lamented, that their great acquirements have been a snare to them : perhaps as great a snare, as some *other* accidentals have been to you ; which, being less immediately your own gifts, you have still less reason than they to value yourself upon them.

"This article being considered as I wish, all the rest will be easy. Were I to accept of the handsome separate provision you seem to intend me ; added to the considerable sums arising from my grandfather's estate since his death (more considerable than perhaps you may suppose from your offer) I should think it my duty to lay up for the family good, and for unforeseen events, out of it : for, as to my donations, I would generally confine myself in them to the tenth of my income, be it what it would. I aim at no glare in what I do of that sort. All I wish for, is the power of relieving the lame the blind, the sick, and the industrious poor, and those whom accident has made so, or sudden distress reduced. The common or bred beggars I leave to others, and to the public provision. They cannot be lower : perhaps they wish not to be higher : and, not able to do for every one, I aim not at works of supererogation. Two hundred pounds a year would do all I wish to do of the separate sort : for all above, I would content myself to ask you : except, mistrusting your own economy, you would give up to my management and keeping, in order to provide for future contingencies, a larger portion ; for which, as your steward, I would regularly account.

"As to clothes, I have particularly two suits, which, having been only in a matter tried on, would answer for any present occasion. Jewels I have of my grandmother's, which want only new setting : another set I have, which on particular days I used to wear. Although these are not sent me, I have no doubt being merely personals, but they will, when I send for them in *another name* ; till when I should not chose to wear any.

"As to your complaints of my diffidences, and the like, I appeal to your own heart, if it be possible for you to make my case your own for one moment, and to retrospect some parts of your behaviour, words, and actions, whether I am not rather to be justified than censured : and whether, of all men in the world, *avowing what you avow*, you ought not to think so. If you do not, let me admonish you, sir, from the very *mismatch*, that then must appear to be in our minds, never to seek, nor so much as wish to bring about the *most intimate* union of interests between yourself and

May 20

"CLARISSA HARLOWE."

The original of this charming paper, as Dorcas tells me, was torn almost in two. In one of her pets, I suppose ! What business have the sex, whose principal glory is meekness, and patience, and resignation, to be in a passion, I trow ?—Will not she, who allow ; herself such liberties as a maiden, take greater when married ?

* * * *

I have just read over again this intended answer to my proposals: and how I adore her for it!

But yet, she has not given it or sent it to me.—It is not therefore *her* answer. It is not written *for* me, though to me.

Nay, she has not *intended* to send it to me: she has even torn it, perhaps with indignation, as thinking it too *good* for me. By this action she absolutely retracts it. Why then does my foolish fondness seek to establish for her the same merit in my heart, as if she avowed it? Pr'ythee, dear Belford, once more leave us to our fate; and do not thou interpose with thy nonsense to weaken a spirit already too squeamish, and strengthen a conscience that has declared itself of her party.

Then again, remember thy recent discoveries, Lovelace! Remember her indifference, attended with all the appearance of contempt and hatred. View her, even *now*, wrapped up in reserve and mystery; meditating plots, as far as thou knowest, against the sovereignty thou hast, by right of conquest, obtained over her. Remember, in short, all thou hast *threatened* to remember against this insolent beauty, who is a rebel to the power she has listed under.

Tuesday, May 23.

WELL did I, but just in time, conclude to have done with Mrs. Fretchville and the house: for here Mennell has declared, that he cannot in conscience and honour go any further.—He would not for the world be accessory to the deceiving of such a lady!—I was a fool to let either you or him see her; for ever *since*, ye have both had scruples, which neither would have had were a *woman* to have been in the question.

Mennell has, however, though with some reluctance, consented to write me a letter, provided I will allow it to be the last step he shall take in this affair.

Now this letter gives the servant the small-pox: and she has given it to her unhappy vapourish lady.

The widow can't be removed; and that's enough: and Mennell's work is over; and his conscience left to plague him for his own sins, and not another man's: and, very possibly, plague enough will it give him for those.

This letter is directed, *To Robert Lovelace, Esq. or, in his absence, To his Lady.* She had refused dining with me, or seeing me; and I was out when it came. She opened it: so is my lady by her own consent, proud and saucy as she is.

I am glad at my heart that it came before we entirely made up. She would else perhaps have concluded it to be *contrived for a delay*; and, now moreover, we can accommodate our old and new quarrels together: and that's contrivance, you know. But how is

her dear heart humbled to what it was when I knew her first, that she can apprehend any delays from me; and have nothing to do but to vex at them!

I came in to dinner. She sent me down the letter, desiring my excuse for opening it.—Did it before she was aware. Lady-pride, Belford!—Recollection, then retrogradation!

I requested to see her upon it that moment.—But she desires to suspend our interview till morning. I will bring her to own, before I have done with her, that she can't see me too often.

My impatience was so great, on an occasion so *unexpected*, that I could not help writing to tell her, "How much vexed I was at the accident: but that it need not delay my happy day, as that did not depend upon the house. [*She knew that before, she'll think; and so did I:*]" and as Mrs. Fretchville, by Mr. Mennell, so handsomely expressed her concern upon it, and her wishes, that it could suit us to bear with the unavoidable delay, I hoped, that going down to the Lawn for two or three of the summer months, when I was made the happiest of men, would be favourable to all round."

The dear creature takes this incident to heart, I believe, she has sent word to my repeated request to see her notwithstanding her denial, that she cannot till the morning: it shall be then at six o'clock, if I please!

To be sure I *do* please!

Did I tell thee, that I wrote a letter to my cousin Montague, wondering that I heard not from Lord M. as the subject was so very interesting! In it I acquainted her with the house I was about taking; and with Mrs. Fretchville's vapourish delays.

I was very loth to engage my own family, either man or woman, in this affair; but I must take my measures securely: and already they all think as bad of me as they well can. You observe by my Lord M.'s letter to yourself, that the well-manner'd peer is afraid I should play this admirable creature one of my *usual dog's tricks*.

I have received just now an answer from Charlotte.

DEAR COUSIN,

M. Hall, May 22.

WE have been in daily hope for a long time, I must call it, of hearing that the happy knot was tied. My lord has been very much out of order: and yet nothing would serve him but he would himself write an answer to your letter. It was the only opportunity he should ever have, perhaps, to throw in a little good advice to you, with the hope of its being of any signification: and he has been several hours in a day, as his gout would let him, busied in it. It wants now only his last revisal. He hopes it will have the greater weight with you, if it appear all in his own hand-writing.

His lordship has been very busy, at the times he could not write, in consulting Pritchard about those estates, which he proposes to transfer to you on the happy occasion, that he may answer your letter in the most acceptable manner; and shew, by effects, how kindly he takes your invitation. I assure you, he is mighty proud of it.

As for myself, I am not at all well, and have not been for some weeks past, with my old stomach-disorder. I had certainly else before now have done myself the honour you wonder I have *not* done myself. Lady Betty, who would have accompanied me (for we had laid it all out) has been exceedingly busy in her law affair; her antagonist, who is actually on the spot, having been making proposals for an accommodation. But you may assure yourself, that when our dear relation-elect shall be entered upon the new habitation you tell me of, we will do ourselves the honour of visiting her, and if any delay arises from the dear lady's want of courage, we will endeavour to inspire her with it, and be sponsors for you; for, cousin, I believe you have need to be christened over again before you are entitled to so great a blessing. What think you?

My best compliments, and sister's, to the most deserving lady in the world [you will need no other direction to the person meant] conclude me,

Your affectionate cousin and servant,

CHARL. MONTAGUE.

Thou seest how seasonably this letter comes. I hope my lord will write nothing but what I may shew to my beloved. I have actually sent her up this letter of Charlotte's; and hope for happy effects from it.

R. L.

Clarissa in her next letter, gives Miss Howe an account of what has passed between Mr. Lovelace and herself. She resents his behaviour with her usual dignity: but when she comes to mention Mr. Mennell's letter, she re-urges Miss Howe to perfect her scheme for her deliverance; being resolved to leave him. But, dating again, on his sending up to her Miss Montague's letter, she alters her mind, and desires her to suspend for the present her application to Mrs. Townsend.

I HAD begun, says *she*, to suspect all he had said of Mrs. Fretchville and her house; and even Mr. Mennell himself, though so well appearing a man. But now that I find Mr. Lovelace had apprised his relations of his intention to take it, and had engaged some of the ladies to visit me there; I could hardly forbear blaming myself for censuring him as capable of so vile an in posture. But

may he not thank himself for acting so very unaccountably, and taking such needlessly-awry steps, as he has done; embarrassing, as I told him, his own meanings, if they were good?

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

Wednesday, May 24.

[*He gives his friend an account of their interview that morning, and of the happy effects of his cousin Montague's letter in his favour. Her reserves, however, he tells him, are not absolutely banished. But this he imputes to form.*]

I REGRETTED the illness of Mrs. Fretchville; as the intention I had to fix her dear self in the house before the happy knot was tied, would have set her in that independence in *appearance*, as well as *fact*, which was necessary to shew to all the world, that her choice was free; and as the ladies of my family would have been proud to make their court to her there; while the settlements and our equipages were preparing. But on any other account, there was no great matter in it; since when my happy day was over, we could, with so much convenience, go down to the Lawn, to my Lord M.'s, and to Lady Sarah's or Lady Betty's, in turn; which would give full time to provide ourselves with servants, and other accommodations.

How sweetly the charmer listened!

She asked, if she might take a copy of Miss Montague's letter?

I said she might keep the letter itself, and send it to Miss Howe, if she pleased; for *that*, I supposed, was her intention.

She bowed her head to me.

There, Jack! I shall have her courtesy to me by-and-bye, I question not.

Talking of the settlements, I told her, I had rather that Pritchard (mentioned by my cousin Charlotte) had not been consulted on this occasion. Pritchard, indeed, was a very honest man; and had been for a generation in the family; and knew the estates, and the condition of them, better than either my lord or myself: but Pritchard, like other old men, was diffident and slow; and valued himself upon his skill as a draughtsman; and for the sake of that paltry reputation, must have all his forms preserved, were an imperial crown to depend upon his dispatch.

I kissed her unrepulsing hand no less than five times during this conversation. Lord, Jack, how my generous heart ran over!—She was quite obliging at parting.—She in a manner asked me *leave* to retire; to re-peruse Charlotte's letter.—I think she bent her knees to me; but I won't be sure.—How happy might we

have both been long ago, had the dear creature been always as complaisant to me ! For I do love respect, and, whether I deserve it or not, always had it, till I knew this proud beauty.

And now, Belford, are we in a train, or the deuce is in it. Every fortified town has its strong and its weak place. I had carried on my attacks against the impregnable parts. I have no doubt but I shall either *shine* or *smuggle* her out of her cloak, since she and Miss Howe have intended to employ a smuggler against *me*.

Thursday, May 25.

THOU seest, Belford, how we now drive before the wind.-- The dear creature now comes almost at the first word, whenever I desire the honour of her company. I told her last night, that apprehending delay from Pritchard's slowness, I was determined to leave it to my lord to make his compliments in his own way ; and had actually that afternoon put my writings into the hands of a very eminent lawyer, Counsellor Williams, with directions for him to draw up settlements from my own estate, and conformable to those of my mother ; which I put into his hands at the same time. It had been, I assured her, no small part of my concern, that her frequent displeasure, and our mutual misapprehensions, had hindered me from advising with her before on this subject. Indeed, indeed, my dearest life, said I, you have hitherto afforded me but a very thorny courtship.

Now, Belford, I have actually deposited these writings with Counsellor Williams : and I expect the drafts in a week at furthest. So shall be doubly armed. For if I *attempt*, and *fail*, these will be ready to throw in, to make her have patience with me *till I can try again*.

Everything of this nature the dear creature answered, (with a downcast eye, and a blushing cheek) she left to me.

I proposed my lord's chapel for the celebration, where we might have the presence of Lady Betty, Lady Sarah, and my two cousins Montague.

She seemed not to favour a public celebration ; and waived this subject for the present. I doubted not but she would be as willing as I, to decline a public wedding ; so I pressed not this matter further just then.

But patterns I *actually produced* ; and a jeweller was to bring us this day several sets of jewels for her choice. But the patterns she would not open. She sighed at the mention of them : the second patterns, she said, that had been offered to her. And very peremptorily forbid the jeweller's coming ; as well as declined my offer of causing my mother's to be new set at least for the present.

• I do assure thee, Belford, I was in earnest in all this My

whole estate is nothing to me, put in competition with her hoped-for favour.

She then told me, that she had put into writing her opinion of my general proposals; and there had expressed her mind as to clothes and jewels: but on my strange behaviour to her (*for no cause that she knew of*) on Sunday night, she had torn the paper in two.

I earnestly pressed her to let me be favoured with a sight of this paper torn as it was. And after some hesitation, she withdrew, and sent it to me by Dorcas.

I perused it again. It was in a manner new to me, though I had read it so lately; and by my soul I could hardly stand it. An hundred admirable creatures I called her to myself. But I charge thee, write not a word to me in her favour, if thou meanest her well; for if I spate her, it must be all *ex mero motu*.

LOVELACE.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

Friday, May 26.

AND now, Belford, what dost thou think?

That thou art a cursed fellow, if—

If—No ifs—but I shall be very sick to-morrow. I shall 'faith Sick—Why sick? What a devil shouldst thou be sick for?

For more good reasons than one, Jack.

* * * *

Cocoa-tree, Saturday, May 27.

THIS ipecacuanha is a most disagreeable medicine. That these cursed physical folks can find out nothing to do us good, but what would poison the devil! In the other world, were they only to take physic, it would be punishment enough of itself for a misspent life.

But now this was to take down my countenance. It has done it: for, with violent retchings, having taken enough to make me sick, and not enough water to carry it off, I presently looked as if I had kept my bed for a fortnight.

Two hours it held me. I had forbid Dorcas to let her lady know any thing of the matter, out of tenderness to her; being willing when she knew my prohibition, to let her see that I *expected* her to be concerned for me.—

Well, but Dorcas was nevertheless a *woman*, and she can *whisper* to her lady a secret that she is enjoined to keep!

What's the matter, Dorcas?

I must not tell you, madam,—my master ordered me not to tell you—but he is in a worse way than he thinks for!—But he would not have *you* frightened.

High concern took possession of every sweet feature. She pitied me!—By my soul, she pitied me!

At last, O Lord! let Mrs. Lovelace know—there is danger to be sure! whisper'd from one nymph to another; but at the door, and so loud, that my listening fair-one might hear.

Out she darts—As how! as how, Dorcas!

O madam—a vomiting of blood! A vessel broke, to be sure

Down she hastens; finds every one as busy over my blood in the entry, as if it were that of the Neapolitan saint.

In steps my charmer, with a face of sweet concern.

How do you, Mr. Lovelace?

O my best love!—very well!—very well!—Nothing at all! nothing of consequence!—I shall be well in an instant!—Straining again! for I was indeed plaguy sick, though no more blood came.

In short, Belford, I have gained my end! I see the dear soul loves me. I see she forgives me all that's past. I see I have credit for a new score.

I was well already, on taking the styptic from *her* dear hands.

On her requiring me to take the air, I asked if I might have the honour of her company in a coach; and this, that I might observe if she had an intention of going out in my absence.

If she thought a chair were not a more proper vehicle for my case, she would with all her heart!

I kissed her hand again! She was all goodness! Would to Heaven I better deserved it, I said!—But all were golden days before us!—Her presence and generous concern had done every thing. I was well! nothing ailed me. But since my beloved will have it so, I'll take a little airing!—Let a chair be called!—O my charmer!—*were I to have owed this indisposition to my late harasses, and to the uneasiness I have had for disobliging you;* all is infinitely compensated by your goodness—All the art of healing is in your smiles!—Your late displeasure was the only malady!

And now, Belford, was it not worth while to be sick! And yet I must tell thee, that too many pleasanter expedients offer themselves, to make trial any more of this confounded ipecacuanha.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.

Saturday, May 27.

MR. LOVELACE, my dear, has been very ill. Suddenly taken. With a vomiting of blood in great quantities. Some vessel broken

He complained of a disorder in his stomach over-night. I was the more affected with it, *as I am afraid it was occasioned by the violent contentions between us.*—But was I in fault?

He took great care to have his illness concealed from me as long as he could. So tender in the violence of his disorder! so desirous to make the best of it!—I wish he had not been ill in my sight. I was too much affected—every body alarming me with his danger—the poor man, from such high health, so *suddenly* taken!—and so unprepared!

He is gone out in a chair. I advised him to do so. I fear that my advice was wrong; since quiet in such a disorder must needs be best.

I am really very uneasy. For I have, no doubt, exposed myself to him and to the women below. *They* indeed will excuse me, as they think us married. But if he be not generous, I shall have cause to regret this surprise; which has taught me more than I knew of myself.

You will not wonder that I am grave on this detection—*detection*, must I call it? What can I call it?—

Dissatisfied with myself, I am afraid to look back upon what I have written: and yet know not how to have done writing. I never was in such an odd frame of mind.—I know not how to describe it—*Was you ever so?*—Afraid of the censure of her you love—yet not conscious that you deserve it?

Your affectionate

CL. HARLOWE.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

Tuesday, May 30.

I HAVE a letter from Lord M. Such a one as I would wish for, if I intended matrimony. But as matters are circumstanced, I cannot think of shewing it to my beloved.

My lord regrets, “that he is not to be the lady’s nuptial-father. He seems apprehensive that I have still, specious as my reasons are, some mischief in my head.”

He graciously consents, “that I may marry when I please. and offers one or both of my cousins to assist my bride, and to support her spirits on the occasion; since, as he understands, she is so much afraid to venture with me.

“Pritchard he tells me, has his final orders to draw up deeds for assigning over to me in perpetuity 1000*l.* *per annum*; which he will execute the same hour that the lady in person owns her marriage.”

Wednesday, May 31.

ALL still happier and happier. A very high honour done me a chariot instead of a coach, permitted, purposely to indulge me in the subject of subjects.

Our discourse in this sweet airing turned upon our future manner of life. The day is bashfully promised me. *Soon* was the answer to my repeated urgency. Our equipage, our servants, our liveries, were part of the delightful subject. A desire that the wretch who had given me intelligence out of the family (honest Joseph Leman) might not be one of our menials; and her resolution to have her faithful Hannah, whether recovered or not, were signified; and both as readily assented to.

Her wishes, from my attentive behaviour, when with her at St. Pauls, that I would often accompany her to the divine service, were gently intimated, and as readily engaged for. I assured her, that I ever had respected the clergy in a body; and some individuals of them (her Dr. Lewen for one) highly; and that, were not going to church an act of religion, I thought it a most agreeable sight to see rich and poor, all of a *company*, as I might say, assembled once a week in one place, and each in his or her best attire, to worship the God that made them.

The reconciliation prospect was enlarged upon. If her uncle Harlowe will but pave the way to it, and if it can be brought about she shall be happy,—happy, with a sigh, *as it is now possible she can be.*

I told her that I had heard from Pritchard, just before we set out on our airing, and expected him in town to-morrow from Lord M. to take my directions. I spoke with gratitude of my lord's kindness to me; and with pleasure of Lady Sarah's, Lady Betty's, and my two cousins Montague's veneration for her: as also of his lordship's concern that his gout hindered him from writing a reply *with his own hand* to my last.

Mrs. Sinclair and the nymphs are all of opinion, that I am now so much a favourite, and have such a visible share in her confidence, and even in her affections, that I may do what I will, and plead for excuse, violence of *passion*; which, they will have it, makes violence of *action* pardonable with their sex; as well as an *allowed extenuation* with the *unconcerned of both sexes*; and they all offer their helping hands. And is she not in a fine way of being reconciled to her friends? And was not the want of that reconciliation the pretence for postponing the consummation?

Friday, June 2.

NOTWITHSTANDING my studied-for politeness and complaisance for some days past; and though I have wanted courage to

throw the mask quite aside; yet I have made the dear creature more than once look about her, by the warm though decent expression of my passion. I have brought her to own, that I am *more* than indifferent with her: but as to LOVE, which I pressed her to acknowledge, *what need of acknowledgments of that sort, when a woman consents to marry?*—And once repulsing me with displeasure. *The proof of true love I was vowing for her, was RESPECT, not FREEDOM.* And offering to defend myself, she told me that all the conception she had been able to form of a faulty passion, was, that it must demonstrate itself as mine sought to do.

Saturday, June 3.

JUST returned from Doctors' Commons. I have been endeavouring to get a licence. I have the mortification to find a difficulty, as the lady is of rank and fortune, and as there is no consent of father or *next friend*, in obtaining this *all-fettering* instrument.

I made report of this difficulty. "It is very right, she says, that such difficulties should be made."—But not to a man of my known fortune, surely, Jack, though the woman were the daughter of a duke.

I asked, if she approved of the settlements? She said, she had compared them with my mother's, and had no objections to them. She had written to Miss Howe upon the subject, she *owned*; and to inform her of our present situation.

Mr. Belford to Robert Lovelace, Esq.

Tuesday, June 6.

UNSUCCESSFUL as hitherto my application to you has been, I cannot for the heart of me forbear writing once more in behalf of this admirable woman; and yet am unable to account for the zeal which impels me to take her part with an earnestness so sincere.

But all her merit thou acknowledgest; all thy own vileness thou confessest, and even gloriest in it: what hope then of moving so hardened a man?—Yet, as it is not too late, and thou art nevertheless upon the crisis, I am resolved to try what another letter will do. It is but my writing in vain, if it do no good; and if thou wilt let me prevail, I know thou wilt hereafter think me richly entitled to thy thanks.

If thou proceedest, I have no doubt, that this affair will end tragically one way or other. It *must*. Such a woman must interest both gods and men in her cause. But what I most

apprehend, is, that with her own hand, in resentment of the perpetrated outrage, (like another Lucretia) will assert the purity of her heart; or, if her piety preserve her from this violence, that wasting grief will soon put a period to her days. And in either case, will not the remembrance of thy *ever-during* guilt, and *transitory* triumph, be a torment of torments to thee?

Your friend,
J. BELFORD.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

Wednesday, night, 11 o'clock.

FAITH, Jack, thou hadst half undone me with thy nonsense.— But I think I am my own man again.

So near to execution my plot; so near springing my mine; all agreed upon between the women and me; or I believe thou hadst overthrown me.

* * * *

Didst thou not, by the conclusion of my former, perceive the consternation I was in, just as I was about to re-peruse thy letter, in order to prevail upon myself to recede from my purpose of awaking in terrors my slumbering charmer? And what dost think was the matter?

I'll tell thee—

At a little after two, when the whole house was still, or seemed to be so, and as it proved, my Clarissa in bed, and fast asleep; I also in a manner undressed (as indeed I was for an hour before) and in my gown and slippers, I was alarmed by a trampling noise over head, and a confused buz of mixed voices, some louder than others, like scolding, and little short of screaming. While I was wondering what could be the matter, down stairs ran Dorcas, and at my door, in an accent rather frightedly and hoarsely inward, than shrilly clamorous, she cried out, Fire! Fire! And this the more alarmed me, as she seemed to endeavour to cry out louder, but could not.

I was there in a moment, and found all owing to the carelessness of Mrs. Sinclair's cook-maid, who, having sat up to read when she should have been in bed, had set fire to an old pair of calico window-curtains. She had had the presence of mind, in her fright, to tear down the half-burnt vallens, as well as curtains, and had got them, though blazing, into the chimney, by the time I came up; so that I had the satisfaction to find the danger happily over.

Meantime Dorcas, after she had directed me up stairs, not knowing the worst was over, and expecting every minute the

house would be in a blaze, out of tender regard for her lady ran to her door, and rapping loudly at it, in a recovered voice, cried out, with a shrillness equal to her love, *Fire! Fire! The house is on fire!—Rise, madam!—This instant rise—if you would not be burnt in your bed!*

No sooner had she made this dreadful outcry, but I heard her lady's door with hasty violence unbar, unbolt, unlock, and open, and my charmer's voice sounding like that of one going into a fit.

I trembled with concern for her, and hastened down faster than the alarm of fire had made me run up, in order to satisfy her, that all the danger was over.

When I had *flown down* to her chamber door, there I beheld the most charming creature in the world, supporting herself on the arm of the gasping Dorcas, sighing, trembling, and ready to faint, with nothing on but an under petticoat, her lovely bosom half open, and her feet just slipped into her shoes. As soon as she saw me, she panted, and struggled to speak; but could only say, Oh, Mr. Lovelace! and down was ready to sink.

I clasped her in my arms with an ardour she never felt before: My dearest life! fear nothing: I have been up—the danger is over—the fire is got under—and how, foolish devil [to Dorcas] could you thus, by your hideous yell, alarm and frighten my angel?

Lest the half-lifeless charmer should catch cold in this undress, I lifted her to her bed, and sat down by her upon the side of it, endeavouring with the utmost tenderness, as well of action as expression, to dissipate her terrors.

But, far from being affected, as I wished, by an address so fervent, (although from a man for whom she had so lately owned a regard, and with whom, but an hour or two before, she had parted with so much satisfaction) I never saw a bitterer, or more moving grief, when she came fully to herself.

She appealed to heaven against my *treachery*, as she called it; while I, by the most solemn vows, pleaded my own equal fright, and the reality of the danger that had alarmed us both.

She conjured me, in the most solemn and affecting manner, by turns threatening and soothing, to quit her apartment, and permit her to hide herself from the light, and from every human eye.

I besought her pardon, yet could not avoid offending; and repeatedly vowed, that the next morning's sun should witness our espousals: but, taking, I suppose, all my protestations of this kind as an indication that I intended to proceed to the last extremity, she would hear nothing that I said; but redoubling her struggles to get from me, in broken accents, and exclamations the most vehement, she protested that she would not survive what she called a

treatment so disgraceful and villainous; and, looking all wildly round her, as if for some instrument of mischief, espied a pair of sharp pointed scissors on a chair by the bed-side, and endeavoured to catch them up, with design to make her words good on the spot.

Seeing her desperation, I begged her to be pacified; and having seized the scissors, I threw them into the chimney; and she still insisting vehemently upon my distance, I permitted her to take the chair.

But, O the sweet discomposure!—her eyes running over, yet seeming to threaten future vengeance: and at last her lips uttering what every indignant look and glowing feature portended; exclaiming as if I had done the worst I could do, and vowing never to forgive me; wilt thou wonder if I resumed the incensed the already too much provoked fair one?

I did; and clasped her once more to my bosom: but, considering the delicacy of her frame, her force was amazing, and shewed how much in earnest she was in her resentment; for it was with the utmost difficulty that I was able to hold her: nor could I prevent her sliding through my arms, to fall upon her knees: which she did at my feet: and there, in the anguish of her soul, her streaming eyes lifted up to my face with supplicating softness, hands folded, dishevelled hair; her lovely bosom too heaving with sighs, and broken sobs, as if to aid her quivering lips, in pleading for her—did she implore my compassion, and my honor.

“Consider me *dear* Lovelace,” [*dear* was her charming word!] “on my knees I beg you to consider me, as a poor creature who has no protector but you; who has no defence but your honour.—By that honour! by your humanity! by all you have vowed; I conjure you not to make me abhor myself!—Not to make me vile in my own eyes!”

I mentioned to-morrow, as the happiest day of my life.

Tell me not of to-morrow. If indeed you mean me honourably, *Now*, this very instant NOW! you must shew it, and be gone! You can never in a whole long life repair the evils you may NOW make me suffer.

Wicked wretch!—Insolent villian!—Yes, she called me insolent villian, although so much in my power! And for what!—only for kissing (*with passion indeed*) her inimitable neck, her lips, her cheeks, her forehead, and her streaming eyes, as this assemblage of beauties offered itself at once to my ravished sight; she continued kneeling at my feet as I sat.

Indeed you are!—The worst of villains!—Help! dear blessed people! and screamed out—No help for a poor creature!

Am I then a villain, madame?—*Am* I then a villain, say

you?—And clasped both my arms about her, offering to raise her to my bounding heart.

O no!—And yet you are!—And again I was her *dear* Lovelace!—Her hands again clasped over her charming bosom: Kill me! Kill me!—If I am odious enough in your eyes to deserve this treatment; and I will thank you!—Too long, much too long has my life been a burden to me!—Or, wildly looking all around her, give me but the means, and I will instantly convince you, that my honour is dearer to me than my life!

Then with still folded hands, and fresh streaming eyes, I was her *blessed* Lovelace; and she would thank me with her latest breath, if I would permit her to make that preference, or free her from further indignities.

I sat suspended for a moment: by my soul, thought I, thou art, upon full proof, an angel and no woman! Still, however, close clasping her to my bosom, as I had raised her from her knees, she again slid through my arms, and dropped upon them. —“See, Mr. Lovelace!—Good God! that I should live to see this hour, and to bear this treatment!—See at your feet a poor creature, imploring your pity; who, for your sake, is abandoned of all the world! Let not my father’s curse thus dreadfully operate! Be not *you* the inflicter, who have been the *cause* of it: but spare me! I beseech you spare me!—For how have I deserved this treatment from you? For *your own sake*, if not for *my sake*, and as you would that God Almighty, in your last hour, should have mercy upon *you*, spare me.”

I would again have raised the dear suppliant from her knees; but she would not be raised, till my softened mind, she said, had yielded to her prayer, and bid her rise to be innocent.

Rise then, my angel! Rise, and be what you are, and all you wish to be! Only pronounce me pardoned for what has passed, and tell me you will continue to look upon me with that eye of favor and serenity which I have been blessed with for some days past, and I will submit to my beloved conqueress, whose power never was at so great an height with me, as now, and retire to my apartment.

God Almighty, said she, hear your prayers in your most arduous moments, as you have heard mine! And now leave me this moment leave me, to my own recollection: in *that* you will leave me to misery enough, and more than you ought to wish to your bitterest enemy.

Impossible, my dearest life, till you pronounce my pardon!—Say but you forgive me!—Say but you forgive me!

I beseech you to begone! Leave me to myself, that I *may* think what I *can* do, and what I *ought* to do.

That my dearest creature is not enough. You must tell me.

that I am forgiven : that you will see me to-morrow, as if nothing had happened.

And then I clasped her again in my arms, hoping she would not forgive me—

I will—I do forgive you—wretch that you are !

Nay, my Clarissa ! And is it such a reluctant pardon, mingled with a word so upbraiding, that I am to be put off with when you are thus (clasping her close to me) in my power ?

I do, I *do* forgive you !

Heartily ?

Yes, heartily !

And freely ?

Freely !

And will you look upon me to-morrow as if nothing had passed ?

Yes, yes !

I cannot take these peevish affirmatives, so much like intentional negatives !—Say, you will, upon your honour.

Upon my honour, then—O now, begone !—And never, never—

What, never, my angel !—Is this forgiveness ?

Never, said she, let what has passed be remembered more !

I insisted upon one kiss to seal my pardon—and retired like a fool, a woman's fool, as I was !—I sneakingly retired !—Couldst thou have believed it ?

But I had no sooner entered my own apartment, than reflecting upon the opportunity I had lost, and that all I had gained was but an increase of my own difficulties ; and upon the ridicule I should meet with below upon a weakness so much out of my usual character ; I repented and hastened back, in hope, that through the distress of mind which I left her in, she had not so soon fastened the door ;

But I was justly punished ; for her door was fast : and hearing her sigh and sob, as if her heart would burst ; my beloved creature, said I, rapping gently [her sobbings then ceasing] I want but to say three words to you, which must be the most acceptable you ever heard from me. Let me see you but for one moment.

I thought I heard her coming to open the door, and my heart leapt in that hope ; but it was only to draw another bolt, to make it still the faster ; and she either could not or would not answer me, but retired to the further end of her apartment, to her closet probably. and more like a fool than before, again I sneaked away.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

Thursday morning, eight o'clock.

HER chamber door has not yet been opened. I must not expect she will breakfast with me. Nor dine with me, I doubt. A little silly soul, what troubles does she make to herself by her over-niceness!—All I have done to her, would have been looked upon as a frolic only, a *romping-bout*, and laughed off by nine parts in ten of the sex accordingly. The more she makes of it, the more painful to herself, as well as to me.

Past ten o'clock.

I NEVER longed in my life for any thing with so much impatience, as to see my charmer. She has been stirring, it seems, these two hours.

Dorcas just now tapped at her door, to take her morning commands.

She had none for her, was the answer.

She desired to know, if she would not breakfast?

A sullen and low-voiced *negative* received Dorcas.

I will go myself.

* * * *

Three different times tapped I at the door; but had no answer.

Permit me, dearest creature, to inquire after your health. As you have not been seen to-day, I am impatient to know how you do.

Not a word of answer; but a deep sigh, even to sobbing.

Let me beg of you, madam, to accompany me up another pair of stairs—you'll rejoice to see what a happy escape we have all had.

A happy escape indeed, Jack!—For the fire had scorched the window-board, singed the hangings, and burnt through the slit-deal lining of the window-jambs.

No answer, madam!—Am I not worthy of one word?—Is it thus you keep your promise with me?—Shall I not have the favour of your company for two minutes in the dining-room.

Hem!—And a deep sigh!—were all the answer.

Answer me but how you do! Answer me but that you are well! Is this the forgiveness that was the condition of my obedience?

Then, in a faintish, but angry voice, Begone from my door!—Wretch! inhuman, barbarous, and all that is base and treacherous!—begone from my door! Nor tease thus a poor creature, entitled to protection, not outrage.

I see, madam, how you keep your word with me—if a sud-

den impulse, the effects of an un-thought-of accident, cannot be forgiven—

O the dreadful weight of a father's curse, thus in the very letter of it—

And then her voice dying away in murmurs inarticulate, I looked through the key-hole, and saw her on her knees, her face, though not towards me, lifted up, as well as hands, and these folded, deprecating, I suppose, that gloomy tyrant's curse.

I could not help being moved.

My dearest life! admit me to your presence but for two minutes, and confirm your promised pardon; and may lightning blast me on the spot, if I offer any thing but my penitence, at a shrine so sacred! I will afterwards leave you for the whole day, till to-morrow morning; and then attend you with writings, all ready to sign, a license obtained or if it cannot, a minister without one.

I cannot see you! Would to Heaven I never had! If I write, that's all I can do.

Let your writing then, my dearest life, confirm your promise; and I will withdraw in expectation of it.

Past eleven o'clock.

SHE rang the bell for Dorcas; and, with her door in her hand, only half-opened gave her a billet for me.

These are the contents.—

I cannot see you: nor will I, if I can help it. Words cannot express the anguish of my soul on your baseness and ingratitude.

If the circumstances of things are such, that I can have no way for reconciliation with those who would have been my natural protectors from such outrages, but through *you*, pen and ink must be, at present, the only means of communication between us.

Vilest of men and most detestable of plotters! how have I deserved from you the shocking indignities—but no more—only for your own sake, wish not, at least for a week to come, to see

The undeservedly injured

and insulted

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

King's Arms, Pall Mall, Thursday, two o'clock,

SEVERAL billets passed between us before I went out, by the *internunciship* of Dorcas: for which reason mine are superscribed by her married name.—She would not open her door to receive them; lest I should be near it, I suppose. So Dorcas

was forced to put them under the door (after copying them for thee); and thence to take the answers.

I ordered Dorcas on putting the last billet under the door, and finding it taken up, to tell her, that I hoped an answer to it before I went out.

Her reply was verbal, *Tell him that I care not whither he goes, nor what he does,—And this*, reurged by Dorcas, *was all she had to say to me.*

I looked through the key-hole at my going by her door, and saw her on her knees, at her bed's feet, her head and bosom on the bed, her arms extended, [*sweet creature how I adore her!*] and in her agony heard at that distance, as if her heart would break—by my soul, Jack, I am a *pity*-ful fellow. Recollection is my enemy!—Divine excellence!—Happy with her for so many days together! Now so unhappy!—And for what?—But she is purity itself. And why, after all, should I thus torment—but I must not trust myself with myself, in the humor I am in.

* * * *

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

Thursday evening, June 8.

O for a curse to kill with!—Ruined! Undone! Outwitted! Tricked!—Zounds, man, the lady is gone off! Absolutely gone off! Escaped!—

To what purpose brought I this angel (angel I must yet call her) to this hellish house?—And was I not meditating to do her deserved honor?—By my soul, Belford, I was resolved—but thou knowest what I had *conditionally* resolved—and now, who can tell into what hands she may have fallen!

I am mad, stark mad, by Jupiter, at the thoughts of this!—Unprovided, destitute, unacquainted—some villain, worse than myself, who adores her not as I adore her, may have seized her, and taken advantage of her distress!—Let me perish, Belford, if a whole hecatomb of *innocents*, as the little plagues are called, shall atone for the broken promise and wicked artifices of this *cruel creature!*

* * * *

Going home, as I did, with resolutions favorable to her, judge thou of my distraction, when her escape was first hinted to me, although but in broken sentences. I knew not what I said, nor what I did. I wanted to kill somebody. I flew out of one room into another, while all avoided me but the veteran Betty Carberry, who broke the matter to me. I charged bribery and

corruption, in my first fury, upon all; and threatened destruction to old and young, as they should come in my way.

All my hope is, that Will (who attended us in our airing to Hampstead, to Highgate, to Muswell Hill, to Kentish Town) will hear of her at some one or other of those places. And on this I the rather build, as I remember she was once, after our return, very inquisitive about the stages and their prices; praising the convenience to passengers in their going off every hour; and this in Will's hearing, who was then in attendance. Woe be to the villain, if he recollect not this.

* * * *

I have collected from the result of the inquiries made of the chairman, and from Dorcas's observations before the cruel creature escaped, a description of her dress; and am resolved, if I cannot otherwise hear of her, to advertise her in the Gazette, as an eloped wife, both by her maiden and acknowledged name; for her elopement will soon be known by every *enemy*; why then should not my *friends* be made acquainted with it, from whose inquiries and informations I may expect some tidings of her?

"She had on a brown lustring night-gown, fresh, and looking like new, as everything she wears does whether new or not, from an elegance natural to her. A beaver hat, a black ribband about her neck, and blue knots on her breast. A quilted petticoat of carnation-colored satin; a rose diamond ring, supposed on her finger; and in her whole person and appearance, as I shall express it, a dignity, as well as beauty, that commands the repeated attention of every one who sees her."

The description of her person I shall take a little more pains about. My mind must be more at ease, before I can undertake that. And I shall threaten, "that if, after a certain period given for her voluntary return she be not heard of, I will prosecute any person who presumes to entertain, harbour, abet, or encourage her, with all the vengeance that an injured gentleman and husband may be warranted to take by law, or otherwise."

* * * *

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

A LETTER is put into my hands by Wilson himself—

A letter from Miss Howe to her cruel friend!—

I made no scruple to open it.

It is a miracle that I fell not into fits at the reading of it; and at the thought of what *might* have been the consequence, had it come to the hands of *this Clarissa Harlowe*. Let my justly excited rage excuse my irreverence

O this devilish Miss Howe ;—something must be resolved upon and done with that little fury.

* * * *

Thou wilt see the margin of this cursed letter crowded with indices(). I put them to mark the places which call for vengeance upon the vixen writer, or which require animadversion.

Read it here ; and avoid trembling for me, if thou canst.

*To Miss Letitia Beaumont.**

Wednesday. June 7.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

YOU will perhaps think, that I have been too long silent. But I had begun two letters at different times since my last, and written a great deal each time ; and with spirit enough I assure you ; incensed as I was against the abominable wretch you are with ; particularly on reading yours of the 21st of the past month.

* * * *

I am not my own mistress enough—then my mother—always up and down—and watching as if I were writing to a fellow—but I will try if I can contain myself in tolerable bounds—

The women of the house where you are—O my dear—the women of the house—but you never thought highly of them—so it cannot be very surprising—nor would you have *staid so long with them had not the notion of removing to one of your own*, made you less uneasy, and less curious about their characters and behaviour. Yet I could *now* wish that you had been less reserved among them—but I tease you—in short, my dear, you are certainly in a devilish house !—Be assured, that the woman is one of the vilest of women.—Nor does she go to you by her right name—very true !—her name is *not* Sinclair—nor is the street she lives in, Dover street.

The wretch might indeed have held out the false lights a little more excusably, had the house been an honest house ; and had his end only been to prevent mischief from your brother.—But this contrivance was antecedent, as I think, to your brother's project : so that no excuse can be made for his intentions at the *time*—the man, whatever he may *now* intend, was certainly then, even *then*, a villain in his heart !

And yet who could have thought that a man of fortune, and some *reputation* [this Doleman, I mean ! not your wretch, to be sure !]—formerly a rake indeed—[I inquired after him—long ago ; and so was the easier satisfied]—but married to a woman of family—having had a palsy-blow—and one would think a penitent

* *Clarissa's* fictitious name. Ed.

—[should recommend such a house] to such a man as Lovelace, to bring his future, nay, his *then* supposed, bride to?

* * * *

But I will tell you how I came by my intelligence. *That being a fact*, and requiring the less attention, I will try to account to you for *that*.

Thus then it came about—"Miss Lardner (whom you have seen at her cousin's Biddulph's) saw you at St. James's church on Sunday was fortnight. She kept you in her eye during the whole time; but could not once obtain the notice of yours, though she courted to you twice. She thought to pay her compliments to you when the service was over; but you being nearer the door than she, you slid out, before she could get to you. But she ordered her servant to follow you till you were housed. This servant saw you step into a chair, which waited for you; and you ordered the men to carry you to the place, where they took you up.

"The next day, Miss Lardner sent the same servant, out of mere curiosity, to make private inquiry whether Mr. Lovelace were, or were not with you there. And this inquiry brought out from *different* people, that the house was suspected to be one of those genteel wicked houses, which receive and accommodate *fashionable people* of both sexes.

"Miss Lardner, confounded at this strange intelligence, made further inquiry; enjoining secrecy to the servant she had sent, as well as to the gentleman whom she employed: who had it confirmed from a rakish friend, who knew the house; and told him, that there were two houses; the one *in which all decent appearances were preserved, and guests rarely admitted*; the other, the receptacle of those who were absolutely engaged, and broken to the vile yoke."

Say, my dear creature—say—shall I not execrate the wretch? —But words are weak—what can I say, that will suitably express my abhorrence of such a villain as he must have been, when he meditated to carry a Clarissa to such a place!

* * * *

But now, my dear, do I apprehend, that you are in greater danger than ever yet you have been in; if you are not married in a week; and yet stay in this abominable house. For were you out of it, I own I should not be much afraid for you.

These are my thoughts, on the most deliberate consideration: "That he is now convinced, that he has not been able to draw you off your guard: that therefore, if he can obtain no new advantage over you as he goes along, he is resolved to do you all the *poor justice* that it is in the power of such a wretch as he, to do you. He is the rather induced to this, as he sees that all his

own family have warmly engaged themselves in your cause, and that it is his *higher interest* to be just to you. Then the horrid wretch loves you (as well he may) above all women. I have no doubt of this; with *such* a love as such a wretch is capable of; with *such* a love as Herod loved his Mariamne. He is now therefore, very probably, at last, in earnest."

But if you meet with the least ground for suspicion; if he detain you at the odious house, or wish you to stay, now you know what the people are; fly *him*, whatever your prospects are as well as *them*.

If you do not fly the house upon reading of this, or some way or other get out of it. I shall judge of his power over you by the little you will have over either him or yourself.

One word more, command me up, if I can be of the least service or pleasure to you. I value not fame; I value not censure; nor even life itself. I verily think, as I do your honour, and your friendship—for, is not your honour my honour? And is not your friendship the pride of my life?

May Heaven preserve you, my dearest creature, in honour and safety, is the prayer, the hourly prayer, of

Your ever faithful and affectionate

ANNA HOWE.

Thursday morn. I have written all night.*

To Miss Anna Howe.

MY DEAREST CREATURE,

How you have shocked, confounded, surprised, astonished me, by your dreadful communication!—My *heart is too weak* to bear up against such a stroke as this!—When all hope was with me! When my prospects were so much mended!—But can there be such villany in men.

I am really ill—very ill—grief and surprise, and *now* I will say despair have overcome me!—All, all, you have laid down as conjecture, appears to *me now* to be *more* than conjecture!

O that your mother would have the goodness to permit me the presence of the only comforter that my afflicted, my half-broken heart, could be raised by. But I charge you, think not of coming up without her indulgent permission. I am too ill at present, my dear, to think of combating with this dreadful man; and flying from this horrid house!—*My bad writing will shew you this.*—But my illness will be my present security, should he indeed have meditated villany.—Forgive, O forgive me, my dearest friend, the trouble I have given you!—All must soon—But why add I grief

* Lovelace forged a letter in which he used many of the words and phrases of this one, giving them an entirely different meaning, and gave it to Clarissa.—Ed

to grief, and trouble to trouble?—But I charge you, my beloved creature, not to think of coming up without your mother's leave to the truly desolate and broken-spirited

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Well, Jack!—And what thinkest thou of this last letter? Miss Howe values not either *fame* or *censure*; and thinkest thou, that this letter will not bring the little fury up, though she could procure no other conveyance than her higgler's paniers, one for herself, the other for her maid? She knows whither to come now. Many a little villain have I punished for knowing more than I would have her know, and that by adding to her knowledge and experience. What thinkest thou, Belford, if by getting hither this virago, and giving *cause* for a lamentable letter from her to the fair fugitive, I should be able to recover *her*? Would she not visit that friend in *her* distress, thinkest thou, whose intended visit to her in *hers* brought her into the condition from which she herself had so perfidiously escaped.

Let me enjoy the thought!

Shall I send this letter?—Thou seest I have left the room, if I fail in the exact imitation of so charming a hand, to avoid too strict a scrutiny. Do they not both deserve it of me? Seest thou not how the raving girl threatens her mother? Ought she not to be punished? And can I be a worse devil, or villain, or monster, than she calls me in the long letter I inclose (and has called me in her former letters) were I to punish them both as my vengeance urges me to punish them?

* * * *

But I will not venture. Hickman is a good man, they tell me. I love a good man. I hope one of these days to be a good man myself.

But the principal reason that withholds me [for 'tis a tempting project!] is, for fear of being utterly blown up, if I should not be quick enough with my letter, or if Miss Howe should deliberate on setting out, or try her mother's consent first; in which time a letter from my frightened beauty might reach her; for I have no doubt, wherever she has refuged, but her first work was to write to her vixen friend. I will therefore go on patiently; and take my revenge upon the little fury at my leisure.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.

Thursday evening, June 8.

AFTER my last, so full of other hints, the contents of this will surprise you. O my dearest friend, the man has at last proved himself to be a villain!

It was with the utmost difficulty last night, that I preserved myself from the vilest dishonour. He extorted from me a promise of forgiveness, and that I would see him next day, as if nothing had happened: but if it were possible to escape from a wretch, who, as I have too much reason to believe, formed a plot to fire the house, to frighten me, almost naked, into his arms, how could I see him next day?

I have escaped—Heaven be praised that I have!—And have now no other concern, than that I fly from the only hope that could have made such an husband tolerable to me; the reconciliation with my friends, so agreeably undertaken by my uncle.

All my present hope is, to find some reputable family, or person of my own sex, who is obliged to go beyond sea, or who lives abroad; I care not whither; but if I might choose, in some one of our American colonies—never to be heard of more by my relations, whom I have so grievously offended.

I am at present at one Mrs. Moore's at Hampstead. My heart misgave me at coming to this village, because I had been here with him more than once: but the coach hither was so ready a conveniency, that I knew not what to do better. Then I shall stay here no longer than till I can receive your answer to this: in which you will be pleased to let me know, if I cannot be hid, according to your former contrivance by Mrs. Townsend's assistance, till the heat of his search be over. The Deptford road, I imagine, will be the right direction to hear of a passage, and to get safely aboard.

I am sure you will approve of my escape—the rather, as the people of the house must be very vile: for they, and that Dorcas too, did hear me (I know they did) cry out for help: if the fire had been other than a villanous plot (although in the morning, to blind them, I pretended to think it otherwise) they would have been alarmed as much as I; and have run in, hearing me scream, to *comfort me*, supposing my terror was the fire; to *relieve me*, supposing it were any thing else. But the vile Dorcas went away as soon as she saw the wretch throw his arms about me!—Bless me, my dear, I had only my slippers and an under-petticoat on. I was frightened out of my bed, by her cries of fire; and that I should be burnt to ashes in a moment—and she to go away, and never to return, nor any body else! And yet I heard women's voices in the next room; indeed I did—an evident contrivance of them all:—God be praised, I am out of their house!

My terror is not yet over: I can hardly think myself safe: every well-dressed man I see from my windows, whether on horseback or on foot, I think to be him.

I know you will expedite an answer. A man and horse will be procured me to-morrow early to carry this. To be sure, you

cannot return an answer by the same man, because you must see Mrs. Townsend first : nevertheless, I shall wait with impatience till you *can* ; having no friend but you to apply to ; and being such a stranger to this part of the world, that I know not which way to turn myself ; whither to go ; nor what to do—what a dreadful hand have I made of it !

Mrs. Moore, at whose house I am, is a widow, and of good character : and of this one of her neighbours, of whom I bought a handkerchief, purposely to make enquiry before I would venture, informed me.

I will not set my foot out of doors, till I have your direction : and I am the more secure, having dropt words to the people of the house where the coach set me down, as if I expected a chariot to meet me in my way to Hendon ; a village a little distance from this. And when I left their house, I walked backward and forward upon the hill ; at first, not knowing what to do ; and afterwards, to be certain that I was not watched before I ventured to enquire after a lodging.

You will direct for me, my dear, by the name of Mrs. Harriet Lucas.

Had I not made my escape when I did, I was resolved to attempt it again and again. He was gone to the Commons for a licence, as he wrote me word ; for I refused to see him, notwithstanding the promise he extorted from me.

Your unhappy,

but ever affectionate,

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

Friday morning, past two o'clock.

To triumphe ! To Clarissa, sing !—Once more what a happy man thy friend !—A silly dear novice, to be heard to tell the coachman whither to carry her !—And to go to *Hampstead*, of all the villages about London !—The place where we had been together more than once !

Methinks I am sorry she managed no better !—I shall find the recovery of her too easy a task, I fear ! Had she but known how much difficulty enhances the value of any thing with me, and had she had the least notion of obliging me by it, she would never have stopt short at *Hampstead*, surely.

But thou wilt be impatient to know how I came by my lights. Read the inclosed here, and remember the instructions which from time to time, as I have told thee, I have given my fellow in apprehension of such an elopement ; and that will tell thee all and

what I may reasonably expect from the rascal's diligence and management, if he wishes ever to see my face again.

I received it about half an hour ago, just as I was going to lie down in my clothes: and it has made me so much alive, that, midnight as it is, I have sent for a Blunt's chariot, to attend me here by day dawn, with *my usual coachman*, if possible; and knowing not else what to do with myself, I sat down, and, in the joy of my heart, have not only written thus far, but have concluded upon the measures I shall take when admitted to her presence: for well am I aware of difficulties I shall have to contend with from her perverseness.

HONNORED SUR,

This is to sertifie your honner, as how I am heer at Hamestet, wher I have found out my lady to be in logins at one Mrs. Moore's, near upon Hamestet-Hethe. And I have so ordered matters, that her ladiship cannot stur, but I must have notice of her goins and comins. As I knowed I dursted not look into your honner's fase, if I had not found out my lady, thoff she was gone off the prems's in a quarter of an hour, as a man may; so I knowed you would be glad at hart to know I had found her out; and so I send this Petur Patrick, who is to have 5 shillins, it being now near 12 of the clock at nite; for he would not stur without a hearty drink too—besides; and I was willing all shulde be snug likeways at the logins before I sent.

I have munny of youre honner's; but I thought as how if the man was payed by me beforend, he mought play trix; so left that to your honner.

My lady knows nothing of my being hereaway. But I thoute it best not to leve the plase, because she has taken the logins but for a fue nites.

If your honner come to the Upper Flax, I will be in site all the day about the Tapp-house or the Hethe. I have borrowd another cote, instead of your honner's liferie, and a blacke wigg; so cannot be knoen by my lady, iff as howe she shuld see me: and have made as if I had the toothe-ake, so with my hancriffe at my mothe, the teth which your honner was pleased to bett out with your nonner's fyste, and my damn'd wide mothe, as your honner notifys it to be, cannot be knoen to be mine.

The two inner letters I had from my lady, before she went off the prems's. One was to be left at Mr. Wilson's for Miss. Howe. The next was to be for your honner. But I knoed you was not at the plase directed; and being afear'd of what fell out, so I kept them for your honner, and so could not give um to you, until I sced you. Miss How's I only made belief to her ladyship as I

carried it, and sed as how there was nothing left for hur, as shee wished to knoe: so here they be bothe.

I am, may it pleas your honner,
Your honner's most dutiful,
and, wonce more, happy servant,
WM. SUMMERS.

• *Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.*

Upper Flask, Hampstead, Fri. morn.

7 o'clock. June 9.

I AM now here, and here have been this hour and half.

All Will's account from the lady's flight to his finding her again, all the accounts of the people of the house, the coachman's information to Will, and so forth, collected together, stand thus.

"The Hampstead coach, when the dear fugitive came to it, had but two passengers in it. But she made the fellow go off directly, paying for the vacant places.

"The two passengers directing the coachman to set them down at the Upper Flask, she bid him set her down there also.

"They took leave of her (very respectfully no doubt); and she went into the house, and asked, if, she could not have a dish of tea, and a room to herself for half an hour.

"They shewed her up to the very room where I now am. She sat at the very table I now write upon; and, I believe, the chair I sit in was hers.

"She seemed spiritless and fatigued. The landlady herself chose to attend so genteel and lovely a guest: She asked her, if she would have bread and butter with her tea?

"No. She could not eat.

"They had very good biscuits.

"As she pleased.

"The woman stept out for some; and returning on a sudden, she observed the sweet fugitive endeavouring to restrain a violent burst of grief, to which she had given way in that little interval.

"However, when the tea came, she made the landlady sit down with her, and asked her abundance of questions about the villages and roads in that neighbourhood.

"The woman took notice to her, *that she seemed to be troubled in mind.*

"Tender spirits, she replied, could not part with *dear friends* without concern."

She meant *me*, no doubt.

"She made no inquiry about a lodging, though by the sequel thou'lt observe, that she seemed to intend to go no further that night than Hampstead. But after she had drank two dishes, and put a biscuit in her pocket—(Sweet soul! to serve for her supper perhaps) she laid down half a crown; and refusing change, sighing, took leave, saying, she would proceed towards Hendon; the distance to which had been one of her questions.

"She had, as the people took notice to one another, something so uncommonly noble in her air, and in her person and behaviour, that they were sure she was of quality. And having no servant with her of either sex, her eyes being swelled and red, they were sure there was an elopement in the case, either from parents or guardians: for they supposed her too young and too maidenly to be a married lady: and were she married, no husband would let such a fine young creature be unattended and alone; nor give her cause for so much grief as seemed to be settled in her countenance. Then, at times, she seemed to be so bewildered, they said, that they were afraid she had it in her head to make away with herself.

"All these things, put together, excited their curiosity; and they engaged a *peery* servant, as they called a footman who was drinking with Kit the ostler at the tap-house, to watch all her motions. This fellow reported the following particulars, as they were re-reported to me.

"She indeed went towards Hendon, passing by the sign of the Castle on the Heath: then stopping, looked about her, and down in the valley before her. Then, turning her face towards London, she seemed, by the motion of her handkerchief to her eyes, to weep; repenting [who knows?] the rash step she had taken and wishing herself back again.

"Then, continuing on a few spaces, she stopt again; and, as if disliking her road, again seeming to weep, directed her course back towards Hampstead."

"By this time she had reached the houses. She looked up at every one, as she passed; now and then breathing upon her bared hand, and applying it to her swelled eyes, to abate the redness and dry the tears. At last, seeing a bill up for letting lodgings, she walked backwards and forwards half a dozen times, as if unable to determine what to do. And then went further into the town; and there the fellow being spoken to by one of his familiars, lost her for a few minutes: but he soon saw her come out of a linen-drapery shop, attended by a servant-maid, having, as he believed, bought some little matters, and, as it proved, got that maid-servant to go with her to the house she is now at.

"The fellow, after waiting about an hour, and not seeing her

come out, returned, concluding that she had taken lodgings there."

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

Hampstead, Friday night, June 9.

Now, Belford, for the narrative of narratives. I will continue it, as I have opportunity; and that so dexterously, that if I break off twenty times, thou shalt not discern where I piece my thread.

Although grievously afflicted with the gout, I alighted out of my chariot (leaning very hard on my cane with one hand, and my new servant's shoulder with the other) the same instant almost that he had knocked at the door, that I might be sure of admission into the house.

I took care to button my great coat about me, and to cover with it even the pommel of my sword, being a little too gay for my years. I knew not what occasion I might have for my sword. I stooped forward; blinked with my eyes to conceal their lustre [No vanity in saying that, Jack;] my chin wrapped up for the tooth-ach; and my slouched laced hat, giving me, altogether, the appearance of an antiquated beau.*

My wife, I resolved beforehand, should have a complication of disorders.

The maid came to the door. I asked for her mistress. She shewed me into one of the parlors; and I sat down with a gouty Oh!

Enter Goody Moore.

Your servant, madam—But you must excuse me; I cannot well stand—I find by the bill at the door, that you have lodgings to let [mumbling my words as if, like my man Will, I had lost some of my fore-teeth]: be pleased to inform me what they are; for I like your situation—and I will tell you my family—I have a wife, a good old woman—older than myself, by the way, a pretty deal. She is in a bad state of health, and is advised into the Hampstead air.

When, sir, shall you want to come in?

I will take them from this very day; and, if convenient, will bring my wife in the afternoon.

We have a single lady, who will be gone in two or three days. She has one of the best apartments: that will then be at liberty.

You have one or two good ones mean time, I presume, madam, just to receive my wife; for we have lost time—these damned physicians—excuse me, madam, I am not used to curse; but it is owing to the love I have for my wife—they have kept her in hand

* Lovelace goes to Mrs. Moore's disguised from head to foot, &c.

till they are ashamed to take more fees, and now advise her to the air. I wish we had sent her hither at first. But we must now make the best of it.

You shall see what accommodations I have, if you please, sir. But I doubt you are too lame to walk up stairs.

I can make shift to hobble up now I have rested a little. I'll just look upon the apartment my wife is to have. Any thing may do for the servants; and as you seem to be a good sort of gentlewoman, I shan't stand for a price, and will pay well for the trouble besides I shall give.

She led the way; and I helping myself by the banisters, made shift to get up with less fatigue than I expected from ankles so weak.

There were three rooms on a floor: two of them handsome; and the third, she said, still handsomer; but the lady was in it.

I saw, I saw, she was! for as I hobbled up, crying out upon my weak ankles, in the hoarse mumbling voice I had assumed, I beheld a little piece of her as she just cast an eye (with the door ajar, as they call it) to observe who was coming up; and, seeing such an old clumsy fellow, great coated in weather so warm, slouched and muffled up, she withdrew, shutting the door without any emotion. But it was not so with me; for thou canst not imagine how my heart danced to my mouth, at the very glimpse of her; so that I was afraid the thump, thumping villain, which had so lately thumped as much to no purpose, would have choked me.

I liked the lodging well; and the more as she said the third room was still handsomer.

But, madam, cannot a body just peep into the other apartment; that I may be more particular to my wife in the furniture of it?

The lady desires to be private. Sir—but—and was going to ask her leave.

I caught hold of her arm—However, stay, stay, madam: It mayn't be proper, if the lady loves to be private. Don't let me intrude upon the lady—

No intrusion, sir, I dare say: the lady is good-humored. She will be so kind as to step down into the parlour, I dare say. As she stays so little a while, I am sure she will not wish to stand in my way.

I will go ask if I may shew a gentleman the apartment, sir; and, as you are a married gentleman, and not *over* young, she'll perhaps make the less scruple.

Then, like me, she loves elderly folks best perhaps. But it may be she has suffered by young ones!

I fancy she has, sir, or is afraid she shall. She desired to be very private; and if by description inquired after, to be denied.

I appeared, upon the whole, so indifferent about seeing the room, or the lady, that the good woman was the more eager I should see both. And the rather, as I, to stimulate her, declared, that there was more required in my eye to merit the character of a handsome woman, than most people thought necessary; and that I had never seen six truly lovely women in my life.

To be brief she went in; and after a little while came out again. The lady, sir, is retired to her closet. So you may go in and look at the room.

Then how my heart began again to play its pug's tricks!

I hobbled in, and stumped about, and liked it very much; and was sure my wife would. I begged excuse for sitting down, and asked, Who was the minister of the place? If he were a good preacher? Who preached at the chapel? And if *he* were a good preacher, and good *liver* too, madam—I must inquire after *that*: for I love, I must needs say, that the clergy should practise what they preach.

Very right, sir; but that is not so often the case, as were to be wished.

More's the pity, madam. But I have a great veneration for the clergy in general. It is more a satire upon human nature, than upon the cloth, if we suppose those who have the *best* opportunities to be good, less perfect than other people. For my part, I don't love *professional* any more than *national* reflections.—But I keep the lady in her closet. My gout makes me rude.

Then up from my seat stumped I—What do you call these window-curtains, madam?

Stuff-damask, sir.

It looks mighty well, truly. I like it better than silk. It is warmer to be sure, and much fitter for lodging in the country; especially for people in years.

Then stumping towards the closet, over the door of which hung a picture—What picture is that—Oh! I see: a St. Cecilia! A common print, sir!

Pretty well, pretty well! It is after an Italian master.—I would not for the world turn the lady out of her apartment. We can make shift with the other two, repeated I, louder still: but yet mumblingly hoarse; for I had as great a regard to uniformity in accent, as to my words.

O Belford! to be so near my angel, think what a painful constraint I was under.

I was resolved to fetch her out, if possible: and pretending to be going—You can't agree as to any *time*, Mrs. Moore, when we can have this third room, can you?—Not that [whispered I, loud

enough to be heard in the next room; not that] I would incommode the lady: but I would tell my wife *when* abouts—and women, you know, Mrs. Moore, love to have every thing before them of this nature.

Mrs. Moore, said my charmer, you may acquaint the gentleman, that I shall stay here only for two or three days at most, till I receive an answer to a letter I have written into the country; and rather than be your hinderance, I will take up with any apartment a pair of stairs higher.

Not for the world!—Not for the world, young lady! cried I.—My wife, well as I love her, should lie in a garret, rather than put such a considerate lady as you seem to be, to the least inconvenience.

She opened not the door yet; and I said, but since you have so much goodness, madam, if I could but just look into the closet as I stand, I could tell my wife whether it is large enough to hold a cabinet she much values, and will have with her wherever she goes.

Then my charmer opened the door, and blazed upon me, as it were in a flood of light, like what one might imagine would strike a man, who, born blind, had by some propitious power been blessed with his sight, all at once, in a meridian sun.

Upon my soul, I never was so strangely affected before. I had much ado to forbear discovering myself that instant: but, hesitatingly, and in great disorder, I said, looking into the closet, and around it, There is room, I see, for my wife's cabinet; and it has many jewels in it of high price: but, upon my soul [for I could not forbear swearing, like a puppy:—habit is a cursed thing, Jack—] nothing so valuable as the lady I see can be brought into it.

She started, and looked at me with terror. The truth of the compliment, as far as I know, had taken dissimulation from my accent.

I saw it was impossible to conceal myself longer from her, any more than (from the violent impulses of my passion) to forbear manifesting myself. I unbuttoned therefore my cape, I pulled off my flapped slouched hat; I threw open my great coat, and like the Devil in Milton [an odd comparison though!]

I started up in my own form divine,
Touch'd by the beam of her celestial eye,
More potent than Ithuriel's spear.

She no sooner saw who it was, than she gave three violent screams; and, before I could catch her in my arms, (as I was about to do the moment I discovered myself) down she sunk at my

feet in a fit ; which made me curse my indiscretion for so suddenly, and with so much emotion, revealing myself.

The gentlewoman, seeing so strange an alteration in my person, and features, and voice, and dress, cried out, Murder, help ! Murder, help ! by turns for a half a dozen times running. This alarmed the house, and up ran two servant maids, and *my* servant after them. I cried out for water and hartshorn, and every one flew a different way, one of the maids as fast down as she came up ; while the gentlewoman ran out of one room into another, and by turns up and down the apartment we were in, without meaning or end, wringing her foolish hands, and not knowing what she did.

Up then came running a gentleman and his sister, fetched and brought in by the maid, who had run down, and having let in a cursed crabbed old wretch, hobbling with his gout, and mumbling with his hoarse broken-toothed voice, who was metamorphosed all at once into a lively gay young fellow, with a clear accent, and all his teeth, she would have it, that I was neither more or less than the Devil, and could not keep her eye from my foot ; expecting, no doubt, every minute to see it discover itself to be cloven.

For my part, I was so intent upon restoring my angel, that I regarded nobody else. And at last, she slowly recovering motion, with bitter sighs and sobs (only the whites of her eyes however appearing for some moments) I called upon her in the tenderest accent, as I kneeled by her, my arm supporting her head ; My angel ! my charmer ! my Clarissa ; look upon me, my dearest life ! I am not angry with you ; I will forgive you, my best beloved.

The gentleman and his sister knew not what to make of all this : and the less, when my fair one, recovering her sight, snatched another look at me ; and then again groaned, and fainted away.

I threw up the closet-sash for air, and then left her to the care of the young gentlewoman, the same notable Miss Rawlins whom I had heard of at the Flask ; and to that of Mrs. Moore, who by this time had recovered herself ; and then retiring to one corner of the room, I made my servant pull off my gouty stockings, brush my hat, and loop it up into the usual smart cock.

I then stepped to the closet to Mr. Rawlins, whom, in the general confusion, I had not much minded before.—Sir, said I, you have an uncommon scene before you. The lady is my wife, and no gentleman's presence is necessary here but my own.

I beg pardon, sir ; *if* the lady be your wife, I have no business here. *But*, sir, by her concern at seeing you—

Pray, sir, none of your *ifs* and *buts*, I beseech you : nor *your* concern about the *lady's* concern. You are a very unqualified judge in this cause ; and I beg of you, sir, to oblige me with your

absence The women only are proper to be present on this occasion, added I; and I think myself obliged to them for their care and kind assistance.

I withdrew once more from the closet, finding her beginning to recover, lest the sight of me too soon, should throw her back again.

The first words she said, looking round her with great emotion, were, O hide me, hide me! is he gone!—O hide me!—is he gone!

Sir, said Miss Rawlins, coming to me with an air both peremptory and assured, this is some surprising case. The lady cannot bear the sight of you. What you have done is best known to yourself. But another such fit will probably be her last. It would be but kind therefore for you to retire.

It behoved me to have so notable a person of my party; and the rather as I had disobliged her impertinent brother.

The dear creature, said I, may *well* be concerned to see me. If *you*, madam, had a husband who loved you as I love her, you would not, I am confident, fly from him, and expose yourself to hazards, as she does whenever she has not all her way—and yet with a mind not capable of intentional evil—but mother-spoilt!—This is her fault, and all her fault: and the more inexcusable it is, as I am the man of her choice, and have reason to think she loves me above all the men in the world.

You *speak* like a gentleman; you *look* like a gentleman, said Miss Rawlins—but sir, this is a strange case; the lady seems to dread the sight of you.

No wonder, madam; taking her a little on one side nearer to Mrs. Moore. I have three times already forgiven the dear creature—but this *jealousy*!—There is a spice of *that* in it—and of *phrensy* too [whispered I, that it might have the face of a secret, and of consequence the more engage their attention]—but our story is too long—

I then made a motion to go to my beloved. But they desired that I would walk into the next room; and they would endeavor to prevail upon her to lie down.

I begged that they would not suffer her to talk; for that she was accustomed to fits, and when in this way, would talk of any thing that came uppermost; and the more she was suffered to run on, the worse she was; and if not kept quiet, would fall into ravings; which might possibly hold her a week.

They promised to keep her quiet; and I withdrew into the next room, ordering every one down but Mrs. Moore and Miss Rawlins.

She was full of exclamations. Unhappy creature! miserable! ruined! and undone! she called herself wrung her hands, and

begged they would assist her to escape from the terrible evils she should otherwise be made to suffer.

They preached patience and quietness to her; and would have had her to lie down: but she refused; sinking, however, into an easy chair; for she trembled so, she could not stand.

By this time, I hoped, that she was enough recovered to bear a presence that it behoved me to make her bear; and fearing she would throw out something in her exclamations, that would still more disconcert me, I went into the room again.

O there he is! said she, and threw her apron over her face—I cannot see him!—I cannot look upon him!—Begone, begone! touch me not!—

For I took her struggling hand, beseeching her to be pacified; and assuring her, that I would make all up with her upon her own terms and wishes.

Base man! said the violent lady, I have no wishes, but never to behold you more! Why must I be thus pursued and haunted? Have you not made me miserable enough already?—Despoiled of all succour and help, and of every friend, I am contented to be poor, low, and miserable, so I may be free from your persecutions.

Miss Rawlins stared at me [a confident slut this Miss Rawlins, thought I]: so did Mrs. Moore. I told you so! whispering, said I, turning to the women; shaking my head with a face of great concern and pity; and then to my charmer. My dear creature, how you rave! You will not easily recover from the effects of this violence. Have patience, my love. Be pacified; and we will coolly talk this matter over; for you expose yourself, as well as me: these ladies will certainly think you have fallen among robbers, and that I am the chief of them.

So you are! so you are! stamping, her face still covered and sighing as if her heart were breaking, she put her hand to her forehead—I shall be quite distracted!

I will not, my dearest love, uncover your face. You shall *not* look upon me, since I am so odious to you. But this is a violence I never thought you capable of.

And I would have pressed her hand as I held it, with my lips; but she drew it from me with indignation.

Unhand me, sir, said she. I will not be touched by you. Leave me to my fate. What right, what title, have you to persecute me thus?

What right, what title, my dear!

I touched a delicate string, on purpose to set her in such a passion before the women, as might confirm the intimation I had given of a phrensical disorder.

She started up with a trembling impatience, her apron falling from her indignant face—Now, said she, that I am happily out

of thy vile hands, and out of an house I have reason to believe *as* vile, traitor and wretch that thou art, I will venture to cast an eye upon thee—and O that it were in my power, in mercy to my sex, to look thee first into shame, and remorse, and then into death ! *

This violent tragedy-speech, and the high manner in which she uttered it, had its desired effect. I looked upon the women, and upon her in turns, with a pitying eye ; and they shook their wise heads, and besought *me* to retire, and *her* to lie down to compose herself.

The women stared. They did nothing but stare : and appeared to be more and more at a loss what to make of the matter between us.

I pretended to be going from her in a pet ; but when I had got to the door, I turned back ; and as if I had recollected myself, One word more, my dearest creature !—Charming even in your anger !—O my fond soul ! said I, turning half-round, and pulling out my handkerchief.

I believe, Jack, my eyes did glisten a little. I have no doubt but they did. The women pitied me. Honest souls ! they shewed that they had each of them a handkerchief as well as I.

She was going to speak in a high accent, dismissing me from her with a open palm—Nay, hear me out, madam—the Captain, you know, has reported our *marriage* to two different persons. It is come to your brother's ears. My own relations have also heard of it. Letters were brought me from town this morning, from Lady Betty Lawerence and Miss Montague. Here they are [I pulled them out of my pocket, and offered them to her ; but she held back her still open palm, that she might not receive them]. Reflect, madam, I beseech you, reflect, upon the fatal consequences with which this your high resentment may be attended.

Ever since I knew you, said she, I have been in a wilderness of doubt and error. I bless God that I am out of your hands. I will transact for myself what relates to myself. I dismiss all your solicitude for me. Am I not my own mistress !—Have you any title—

The women stared [the devil stare ye, thought I. Can ye do nothing but stare ?]—It was high time to stop her here.

I raised my voice to drown hers—You used my dearest creature, to have a tender and apprehensive heart—you never had so much reason for such a one as now.

Let me judge for myself, upon what I shall *see*, not upon what I shall *hear*—do you think I shall ever—

I dreaded her going on—I *must* be heard, madam, raising my

voice still higher. You *must* let me read one paragraph or two of this letter to you, if you will not read it yourself—

Begone from me, man!—Begone from me with thy letters! What pretence hast thou for tormenting me thus—what right—what title—

Dearest creature, what questions you ask! questions that you can as well answer yourself—

I *can*, I *will* and *thus* I answer them—

Still louder raised I my voice. She was overborne. Sweet soul! it would be hard, thought I, [and yet as I was very angry with her] if such a spirit as thine cannot be brought to yield to such a one as mine!

I lowered my voice on her silence. All gentle, all *intreative*, my accent: my head bowed; one hand held out; the other on my honest heart:—Lady Betty will be in town with my cousin Montague, in a day or two. They will be your visitors. I beseech you do not carry this misunderstanding so far, as that Lord M. and Lady Betty and Lady Sarah, may know it. [*How considerable this made me look to the women*]. Lady Betty will not let you rest till you consent to accompany her to her own seat—and to that lady you may safely entrust your cause.

I then put the letters into her lap, and retired into the next apartment with a low bow, and a very solemn air.

I was soon followed by the two women. Mrs. Moore withdrew to give the fair perverse time to read them: Miss Rawlins for the same reason; and because she was sent for home.

The widow besought her speedy return. I joined in the same request; and she was ready enough to promise to oblige us.

I excused myself to Mrs. Moore for the disguise I had appeared in at first, and for the story I had invented. I told her that I held myself obliged to satisfy her for the whole floor we were upon; and for an upper room for my servant; and that for a month certain.

Just then Miss Rawlins returned with an air of eager curiosity; and having been told what had passed between Mrs. Moore and me, she gave herself airs of office immediately; which I humoured, plainly perceiving, that if I had *her* with me I had the other.

They sat down by me, and threw every feature of their faces into attention. I was resolved to go as near the truth as possible, lest any thing should drop from my Clarissa to impeach my veracity; and yet keep in view what passed at the Flask.

It is necessary, although thou knowest my whole story, and a good deal of my views, that thou shouldst be apprized of the substance of what I told them.

“I gave them, in as concise a manner as I was able, the his

tory of our families, fortunes, alliances, antipathies ; her brother's and mine particularly. I averred the truth of our private marriage." "I told them the conditions my wife had made me swear to ; and to which she held me, in order, I said, to induce me the sooner to be reconciled to her relations."

"I owned that this restraint made me some times ready to fly out." And Mrs. Moore was so good as to declare, that *she did not much wonder at it.*

During the conversation between me and the women ; I had planted myself at the further end of the apartment we were in, over-against the door, which was open ; and opposite to the lady's chamber-door, which was shut. I spoke so low that it was impossible for her, at that distance, to hear what we said ; and in this situation I could see if her door opened.

I told the women, that what I had mentioned to my spouse of Lady Betty's coming to town with her niece Montague, and of their intention to visit my beloved, whom they had never seen, nor she them, was real ; and that I expected news of their arrival every hour. I then shewed them copies of the two letters, which I had left with *her* ; the one from Lady Betty, the other from my cousin Montague.—And here thou mayest read them if thou wilt.

To Robert Lovelace, Esq.

DEAR NEPHEW,

Wedn. morn. June 7.

I UNDERSTAND, that at length all our wishes are answered in your happy marriage. But I think, we might as well have heard of it directly from you, as from the round-about way by which we have been made acquainted with it. If your lady had *her* reasons to wish it to be private while the differences between her family and self continue, you might nevertheless have communicated it to us with *that* restriction, and we should have forborne the public manifestations of our joy, upon an event we have so long desired.

I am, indeed, very much disobliged with you : so is Lady Sarah. But I shall have a very speedy opportunity to tell you so in person ; being obliged to go to town on my old chancery-affair. My cousin Leeson, who is, it seems, removed to Albemarle-street, has notice of it. I shall be at *her* house, where I bespeak your attendance on Sunday night. I have written to my niece Charlotte for either her, or her sister, to meet me at Reading, and accompany me to town. I shall stay but a few days ; my business being matter of form only. On my return I shall call upon Lord M. at M. Hall, to see in what way his last fit has left him.

Meantime, having told you my mind on your negligence, I cannot help congratulating you both on the occasion—your fair lady particularly, upon her entrance into a family which is prepared to admire and love her.

My principal intention of writing to you (dispensing with the necessary punctilio) is, that you may acquaint my dear new niece, that I will not be denied the honor of her company down with me into Oxfordshire. I understand, that your proposed house and equipages cannot be soon ready. She shall be with me till they are. I insist upon it. This shall make all up. My house shall be her own. My servants and equipages hers.

Lady Sarah, who has not been out of her own house for months, will oblige me with her company for a week, in honor of a niece so dearly beloved, as I am sure she will be of us all.

Being but in lodgings in town, neither you nor your lady can require much preparation.

Some time on Monday I hope to attend the dear young lady, to make her my compliments; and to receive *her* apology for *your* negligence: which, and her going down with me, as I said before, shall be full satisfaction. Meantime, God bless *her* for her courage [tell her I say so;] and bless you *both* in each other: and that will be happiness to us all—particularly, to

Your truly affectionate aunt,

ELIZ. LAWRENCE.

To Robert Lovelace, Esq.

DEAR COUSIN,

AT last, as we understand, there is some hope of you. Now does my good lord run over his bead-roll of proverbs; of *black oxen, wild oats, long lanes*, and so forth.

Now, cousin, say I, is your time come; and you will be no longer, I hope, an infidel either to the power or excellence of the sex you have pretended hitherto so much to undervalue; nor a ridiculer or scoffer at an institution which all sober people reverence, and all rakes, sooner or later, are brought to reverence, or to wish they had.

I want to see how you become your silken fetters: whether the charming yoke sits light on your shoulders. If with such a sweet yoke-fellow it does not, my lord, and my sister, as well as I, think that you will deserve a closer tie about your neck.

I have a letter from Lady Betty. She commands either my attendance or my sister's at Reading, to proceed with her to town, to our cousin Leeson's. She puts Lord M. in hopes, that she shall certainly bring down with her our lovely new relation; for she says she will not be denied. His lordship is the willingest

to let *me* be the person, as I am in a manner wild to see *her*; my sister having two years ago, had that honour at Sir Robert Biddulph's. So get ready to accompany us in our return; except your lady has objections strong enough to satisfy us all. Lady Sarah longs to see *her*; and says, this accession to the family will supply to it the loss of her beloved daughter.

I shall soon, I hope, pay my compliments to the dear lady in person: so I have nothing to add, but that I am

Your old mad playfellow and cousin,

CHARLOTTE MONTAGUE.

The women having read the copies of these two letters, I thought that I might then threaten and swagger—"But very little heart have I, said I, to encourage such a visit from Lady Betty and Miss Montague to my wife. For after all, I am tired out with her strange ways. She is not what she was, and (as I told her in your hearing, ladies) I will leave this plaguy island, though the place of my birth, and though the stake I have in it is very considerable; and go and reside in France or Italy, and never think of myself as a married man, *nor live like one.*"

Oh dear! said one.

That would be a sad thing! said the other.

To Robert Lovelace, Esq.

M. Hall, Wedn. June 7.

COUSIN LOVELACE,

I THINK you might have found time to let us know of your nuptials being actually solemnized. I might have expected this piece of civility from you. But perhaps the ceremony was performed at the very time that you asked me to be your lady's father—but I shall be angry if I proceed in my guesses—and *little said is soon amended.*

But I can tell you, that Lady Betty Lawrence, whatever Lady Sarah does, will not so soon forgive you, as I have done. *Women resent slights longer than men.* You that know so much of the sex (I speak it not however to your praise) might have known *that*. But never was you before acquainted with a lady of such an amiable character. I hope there will be but one soul between you. I have before now said, that I will disinherit you, and settle all I can upon her, if you prove not a good husband to her.

May this marriage be crowned with a great many fine boys (I desire no girls) to build up again a family so ancient! The first boy shall take my surname by act of Parliament. That is my will.

Lady Betty and niece Charlotte will be in town about **business before you know where you are**. They long to pay their compliments to your fair bride. I suppose you will hardly be at the Lawn when they get to town; because Greame informs me, you have sent no orders there for your lady's accommodation.

Pritchard has all things in readiness for signing. I will take no advantage of your slights. Indeed I am too much used to them—more praise to my patience, than to your complaisance, however.

My most affectionate compliments and congratulations to my new niece, conclude me, for the present, in violent pain, that with all your heroicalness would make you mad.

Your truly affectionate uncle,

M.

This letter clenched the nail. Not but that, Miss Rawlins said, she saw I had been a wild gentleman; and, truly, she thought so, the moment she beheld me.

They began to intercede for my spouse (so nicely had I turned the tables); and that I would not go abroad, and disappoint a reconciliation so much wished for on one side, and such desirable prospects on the other in my own family.

Who knows, thought I to myself, but more may come of this plot, than I had even promised myself? What a happy man shall I be, if these women can be brought to join to carry my marriage into consummation!

Mr. Lovelace, to John Belford, Esq.

I THOUGHT it was now high time to turn my whole mind to my beloved; who had had full leisure to weigh the contents of the letters I had left with her.

I therefore requested Mrs. Moore to step in, and desire to know whether she would be pleased to admit me to attend her in her apartment, on occasion of the letters I had left with her; or whether she would favour me with her company in the dining-room?

Mrs. Moore desired Miss Rawlins to accompany her in to the lady. They tapped at the door, and were both admitted.

* * * *

Mrs. Moore soon came to me; and I being afraid that something would pass meantime between the other two, which I should not like, took the letters, and entered the room, and found them retired into the closet; my beloved whispering with an air of earnestness to Miss Rawlins, who was all attention.

Her back was towards me ; and Miss Rawlins by pulling her sleeve, giving intimation of my being there. Can I have no retirement uninvaded, sir? said she, with indignation, as if she were interrupted in some talk her heart was in.—What business have you here, or with me?—You have your letters ; have you not?

Lovel. I have, my dear ; and let me beg of you to consider what you are about.

Cl. I will endeavour, sir, to have patience with you for a moment or two, while I ask you a few questions before this lady, and before Mrs. Moore, both of whom you have prejudiced in your favour by your specious stories : Will you say, sir, that we are married together? Lay your hand upon your heart, and answer me, am I your wedded wife?

I am gone too far, thought I, to give up for such a push as this, home-one as it is.

My dearest soul ! how can you put such a question ? Is it either for *your* own honour or *my* own, that it should be doubted?—

You and I ! *Vilest of men !*

My name is Lovelace, madam—

Therefore it is that I call you the *vilest of men* [was this pardonable, Jack !]—*You* and *I* know the truth, the *whole* truth—I want not to clear up my reputation with these gentlewomen :—that is already lost with every one I had most reason to value : but let me have this *new* specimen of what you are capable of—say, wretch, (say, Lovelace, if thou hadst rather) art thou really and truly my wedded husband?

Say ; answer without hesitation.

She trembled with impatient indignation ; but had a wildness in her manner, which I took some advantage of, in order to parry this cursed thrust. And a cursed thrust it was ; since had I positively averred it, she never would have believed any thing I said : and had I owned that I was not married, I had destroyed my own plot, as well with the women as with her ; and could have no pretence for pursuing her, or hindering her from going whithersoever she pleased. Not that I was ashamed to aver it, had it been consistent with policy. I would not have thee think me such a milk-sop neither.

Lovel. My dearest love, how wildly you talk ! What would you have me answer ? Is it necessary that I should answer ? May I not re-appeal this to your own breast ?

Cl. O wretch ! Is this an answer to my question ? Say, are we married, or are we not ?

Lovel. What makes a marriage, we all know. If it be the union of two hearts, [there was a turn, Jack !] to my utmost grief I must say we are *not* ; since now I see you hate me. If it be the

completion of marriage, to my confusion and regret, I must own we are not. But, my dear, will you be pleased to consider what answer half a dozen people whence you came, could give to your question? And do not now, in *the disorder of your mind*, and the height of passion, bring into question before these gentlewomen a point you have acknowledged before those who know us better.

I would have whispered her, but, retreating, and with a rejecting hand, Keep thy distance, *man*, cried the dear insolent—To thine own heart I appeal, since thou evadest me thus pitifully!—I own no marriage with thee!—Bear witness, ladies I do not. And cease to torment me, cease to follow me.—Surely, surely faulty as I have been, I have not deserved to be *thus* persecuted!—I resume, therefore, my former language: you have no right to pursue me: you *know* you have not: begone, then, and leave me to make the best of my hard lot. O my dear cruel father, said she, in a violent fit of grief [falling upon her knees, and clasping her uplifted hands together] thy heavy curse is completed upon thy devoted daughter! I am *punished*, dreadfully punished, *by the very wretch in whom I had placed my wicked confidence!*

By my soul, Belford, the little witch with her words, but more by her manner, moved *me!* Wonder not then, that her action, her grief, her tears, set the women into the like compassionate manifestations.

Had I not a cursed task of it?

The two women withdrew to the further end of the room, and whispered, A strange case! There is no phrensy here—I just heard said.

The charming creature threw her handkerchief over her head and neck, continuing kneeling, her back towards me, and her face hid upon a chair, and repeatedly sobbed with grief and passion.

I took this opportunity to step to the women, to keep them steady.

You see ladies [whispering], what an unhappy man I am!—You see what a spirit this dear creature has!—All, all owing to her implacable relations, and to her father's curse.—A curse upon them all! they have turned the head of the most charming woman in the world.

Ah! sir, sir, replied Miss Rawlins, whatever be the fault of her relations, all is not as it should be between you and her. 'Tis plain she does not think herself married: 'tis plain she does not: and if you have any value for the poor lady, and would not totally deprive her of her senses, you had better withdraw, and leave to time and cooler consideration the event in your favour.

I respectfully withdrew into the next room, that Mrs. Moore might acquaint her [I durst not myself] that I was her lodger

and boarder, as I desired she would: and meeting Miss Rawlins in the passage, Dearest Miss Rawlins, said I, stand my friend join with Mrs. Moore to pacify Mrs. Lovelace, if she has any new flights upon my having taken lodgings, and intending to board here. I hope she will have more generosity than to think of hindering a gentlewoman from letting her lodgings.

I suppose Mrs. Moore (whom I left with my fair one) had apprized her of this before Miss Rawlins went in; for I heard her say, while I withheld Miss Rawlins—"No, indeed; he is much mistaken—surely he does not think I will."

They both expostulated with her, as I could gather from bits and scraps of what they said; for they spoke so low, that I could not hear any distinct sentence, but from the fair perverse, whose anger made her louder. And to this purpose I heard her deliver herself in answer to different parts of their talk to her:—"Good Mrs. Moore, dear Miss Rawlins, press me no further:—I cannot sit down at table with him!"

"I have no objections to his dining with you, madam;" added she, in reply, I suppose to a further question of the same nature—"But I will not stay a night in the house where he lodges."

I went down with the women to dinner, Mrs. Moore sent her fair boarder up a plate; but she only eat a little bit of bread, and drank a glass of water.

* * * *

I went up to my new taken apartment, and fell to writing in character, as usual. I thought I had made good my quarters. But the cruel creature, understanding that I intended to take up my lodgings there, declared with so much violence against it, that I was obliged to submit, and to accept of another lodging, about twelve doors off, which Mrs. Moore recommended. And all the advantage I could obtain was, that Will, unknown to the lady, and for fear of a freak, should lie in the house.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

Saturday, 6 o'clock, June 10.

THE lady gave Will's sweetheart a letter last night to be carried to the post-house, as this morning, directed to Miss Howe, under cover to Hickman. I dare say neither cover nor letter will be seen to have been opened. The contents but eight lines—to own—"the receipt of her double-dated letter in safety; and referring to a longer letter which she intends to write, when she shall have a quieter heart, and less trembling fingers. But mentions something to have been opened [my detecting her she means]

which has given her very great flutters, confusions and apprehensions: but which she will wait the issue of [some hopes for me hence, Jack!] before she gives her fresh perturbations or concern on her account.—She tells her how impatient she shall be for her next," etc.

Now, Belford, I thought it would be but kind in me to save Miss Howe's concern on these alarming hints; since the curiosity of such a spirit must have been prodigiously excited by them. Having therefore so good a copy to imitate, I wrote: and taking out that of my beloved, put under the same cover the following short billet; inscriptive and conclusive parts of it in her own words.

Hampstead, Friday evening.

MY EVER DEAR MISS HOWE,

A FEW lines only, till calmer spirits and quieter fingers be granted me, and till I can get over the shock which your intelligence has given me—to acquaint you—that your kind long letter of Wednesday, and, as I may say, of Thursday morning, is come safe to my hands. On receipt of yours by my messenger to you, I sent for it from Wilson's. There, thank Heaven! it lay. May that Heaven reward you for all your past, and for all your *intended* goodness to

Your for-ever obliged

CL. HARLOWE.

I took great pains in writing this. It cannot, I hope, be suspected. Her hand is so *very* delicate. Yet hers is written less beautifully than she usually writes: and I hope Miss Howe will allow somewhat for *hurry of spirit*, and *unsteady fingers*.

Once more wilt thou wonderingly question—all this pains for a single girl?

Yes, Jack—but is not this girl a CLARISSA?—And who knows but kind fortune, as a reward for my perseverance, may toss me in her charming friend? Less likely things have come to pass, Belford. And to be sure I shall have her, if I resolve upon it.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

Eight o'clock, Sat. morn. June 10.

I AM come back from Mrs. Moore's, whither I went in order to attend my charmer's commands. But no admittance—a very bad night.

Doubtless she must be as much concerned, that she has carried her resentments so very far, as I have reason to be, that I made such poor use of the opportunity I had on Wednesday night.

Sunday morning.

I HAVE had the honour of my charmer's company for two complete hours. We met before six in Mrs. Moore's garden. A walk on the Heath refused me.

The sedateness of her aspect, and her kind compliance in this meeting, gave me hopes. And all that I had urged yesterday to obtain a full and free pardon, that re-urged I.

But the utmost I could obtain was, that she would take no resolution in my favour till she received Miss Howe's next letter.

I have besought her in the conclusion of my reurged arguments, to write to Miss Howe before Miss Howe's answer could come, in order to lay before her the present state of things; and if she *would* pay a deference to her judgment, to let her have an opportunity to give it, on the full knowledge of the case.—

So I would, Mr. Lovelace, was the answer, if I were in doubt myself, I wish to part with you with temper—don't put me upon repeating—

Part with me, madam! interrupted I—I cannot bear those words!—But let me beseech you, however, to write to Miss Howe. I hope, if Miss Howe is not my enemy—

She is not the enemy of your *person*, sir;—as you would be convinced, if you *saw her last letter* to me*. But were she not an enemy to your *actions*, she would not be *my* friend, nor the friend of *virtue*. Why will you provoke from me, Mr. Lovelace, the harshness of expression, which, however deserved by you, I am unwilling just now to use, having suffered enough in the two past days from my own vehemence?

I bit my lip for vexation. I was silent.

Miss Howe, proceeded she, knows the full state of matters already, sir. The answer I expect from her respects *myself*, not *you*. Her heart is too warm in the cause of friendship, to leave me in suspense one moment longer than is necessary, as to what I want to know. Nor does her answer absolutely depend upon herself. She must see a person first; and that person perhaps must see others.

The cursed smuggler-woman, Jack!—Miss Howe's Town send, I doubt not—Plot, contrivance, intrigue, stratagem!—Underground moles these women—but let the earth cover me! let me be a mole too, thought I, if they carry their point!—And if this lady escape me now!

*The lady innocently means Mr. Lovelace's forged one.

O Jack ! I am sick to death, I pine, I die, for Miss Howe's next letter ! I would bind, gag, strip, rob, and do any thing but murder, to intercept it.

But determined as she seems to be, it was evident to me nevertheless, that she had still some tenderness for me.

She often wept as she talked, and much oftener sighed. She looked at me twice with an eye of *undoubted* gentleness, and three times with an eye *tending* to compassion and softness : but its benign rays were as often *snatched* back, as I may say, and her face averted, as if her sweet eyes were not to be trusted, and could not stand against my eager eyes ; seeking, as they did, for a lost heart in hers, and endeavouring to penetrate to her very soul.

More than once I took her hand. She struggled not *much* against the freedom. I pressed it once with my lips. She was not *very* angry. A frown indeed ; but a frown that had more distress in it than indignation.

I hoped, I said, that she would admit of the intended visit, which I have so often mentioned, of the two ladies.

She was *here*. She had seen *me*. She could not help herself at present. She ever had the highest regard for the ladies of my family, because of their worthy characters. There she turned away her sweet face, and vanquished an half-risen sigh.

I kneeled to her then. It was upon a verdant cushion ; for we were upon the grass walk. I caught her hand. I besought her with an earnestness that called up, as I could feel, my heart to my eyes, to make me, by her forgiveness and example, more worthy of them, and of her own kind and generous wishes. By my soul, madam, said I, you stab me with your goodness, your undeserved goodness ! and I cannot bear it !

Why, why, thought I, as I did several times in this conversation, will she not *generously* forgive me ? Why will she make it necessary for me to bring Lady Betty and my cousin to my assistance ? Can the fortress expect the same advantageous capitulation, which yields not to the summons of a resistless conqueror, as if it gave not the trouble of bringing up, and raising its heavy artillery against it ?

What *sensibilities*, said the divine creature, withdrawing her hand, must thou have suppressed !—What a dreadful, what a judicial hardness of heart must thine be ; who canst be capable of such emotions as sometimes thou hast shewn ; and of such sentiments as sometimes have flowed from thy lips ; yet canst have so far overcome them all, as to be able to act as thou hast acted, and that from settled purpose and premeditation ; and this, as it is *said*, throughout the whole of thy life, from infancy to this time !

She then turned from me to go into the house.

Bless me, my beloved creature, bless me with the continuance

of this affecting conversation—remorse has seized my heart!—I have been excessively wrong—give me further cause to curse my heedless folly, by the continuance of this calm, but soul penetrating conversation.

No, no, Mr. Lovelace. I have said too much. Impatience begins to break in upon me. If you can excuse me to the ladies, it will be better for my mind's sake, and for your credit's sake, that I do not see them. Call me to *them* over-nice, petulant, prudish; what you please call me to them. Nobody but Miss Howe, to whom, next to the Almighty, and my own mother, I wish to stand acquitted of wilful error, shall know the whole of what has passed. Be happy, as you may!—*Deserve* to be happy, and happy you will be, in your own reflection at least, were you to be ever so unhappy in other respects. For myself, if I shall be enabled, on due reflection, to look back upon my own conduct, without the great reproach of having wilfully, and against the light of my own judgment, erred, I shall be more happy than if I had all that the world accounts desirable.

We had gone but a few paces towards the house, when we were met by the impertinent women with notice that breakfast was ready. I could only, with uplifted hands beseech her to give me hope of a renewed conversation after breakfast.

No; she would go to church.

And into the house she went, and up stairs directly. Nor would she oblige me with her company at the tea-table.

I offered by Mrs. Moore to quit both the table and the parlour, rather than she should exclude herself, or deprive the two widows of the favour of her company.

That was not all the matter, she told Mrs. Moore. She had been struggling to keep down her temper. It had cost her some pains to do it. She was desirous to compose herself, in hopes to receive benefit by the divine worship she was going to join in.

Mrs. Moore hoped for her presence at dinner.

She had rather be excused. Yet, if she could obtain the frame of mind she hoped for, she might not be averse to shew, that she had got above those sensibilities, which gave consideration to a man who deserved not to be to her what he *had* been.

This said, no doubt, to let Mrs. Moore know, that the garden conversation had not been a reconciling one.

And now, Belford, thou perceivest that all my reliance is upon the mediation of Lady Betty and Miss Montague, and upon the hope of intercepting Miss Howe's next letter.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

Sunday afternoon.

O BELFORD! what a hair'sbreadth escape have I had!—Such a one that I tremble between terror and joy, at the thoughts of what *might* have happened, and did not.

What a perverse girl is this, to contend with her fate; yet has reason to think, that her very stars fight against her! I am the luckiest of men!—But my breath almost fails me, when I reflect upon what a slender thread my destiny hung.

But not to keep thee in suspense; I have within this half-hour, obtained the possession of the expected letter from Miss Howe—and by *such* an accident!*

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

I HAVE begun another letter to thee, in continuation of my narrative: but I believe I shall send thee this before I shall finish that. By the inclosed thou wilt see, that neither of the correspondents deserve mercy from me, and I am resolved to make the ending with one the beginning with the other.

TO MRS. HARRIET LUCAS, AT MRS. MOORE'S, AT HAMPS'HEAD.

AFTER the discoveries I had made of the villainous machinations of the *most abandoned of men*, particularized in my long letter of Wednesday last, you will believe, my dearest friend, that my surprise upon perusing yours of Thursday evening from Hampstead was not so great as my indignation. Had the *villain* attempted to fire a city instead of an house, I should not have wondered at it. All that I am amazed at, is, that he did not discover *his foot* before: and it is as strange to me, that, having got you at such a shocking advantage, and in such a horrid house, you could, at the time *escape dishonour*, and afterwards get from such a set of *infernals*.

Saturday afternoon.

I HAVE just parted with Mrs. Townsend. I thought you had once seen her with me: but she says she never had the honour to be personally known to you. She has a *manlike spirit*. She knows the whole world. And her two brothers being in town,

* The messenger with the letter came while Clarissa was at church and Lovelace secured it by bribing the servants and inducing Mrs. Bevis (a niece of Mrs. Moore) to personate Clarissa.—ED.

she is sure she can engage *them* in so good a cause, and (if there should be occasion) *both their ships' crews*, in your service.

Give your consent, my dear; and the *horrid villain* shall be repaid with *broken bones, at least*, for all his villainies!

The misfortune is, Mrs. Townsend cannot be with you till *Thursday next, or Wednesday at the soonest*: are you sure you can be safe where you are, till then? I think you are too near London; and perhaps you had better be *in it*. If you remove, let me, the very moment, know *whither*.

How my heart is torn, to think of the necessity so dear a creature is driven to, of hiding herself! *Devilish fellow!* He must have been sportive and wanton in his inventions—yet that cruel, that savage sportiveness has saved you from the sudden violence to which he has had recourse in the violation of others, of names and families not contemptible. For such the *villain* always gloried to spread his snares.

Mrs. Townsend will in person attend you—she *hopes*, on Wednesday—her brothers, and some of their people, will scatteringly, and as if they knew nothing of you, [so we have contrived] see you safe not only to London, but to her house at Deptford.

She has a kinswoman, who will take your commands there, if she herself be obliged to leave you. And there you may stay till the wretch's fury on losing you, and his search, are over.

He will very soon, 'tis likely, enter upon some *new villainy* which may engross him: and it may be given out, that you are gone to lay claim to the protection of your cousin Morden at Florence.

After a while I can procure you a lodging in one of our neighboring villages: where I may have the happiness to be your daily visitor. And if this Hickman be not silly and apish, and if my mother do not do unaccountable things, I may the sooner think of marrying, that I may without control receive and entertain the darling of my heart.

ANNA HOWE.

London, Monday, June 12.

I CAME to town about seven this morning—all necessary directions and precautions remembered to be given.

I besought the favor of an audience before I set out. I was desirous to see which of her lovely faces she was pleased to put on, after another night had passed. But she was resolved, I found, to leave our quarrel open. She would not give me an opportunity so much as to intreat her again to close it, before the arrival of Lady Betty and my cousin.

I had notice from my proctor, by a few lines brought by a man and horse, just before I set out, that all difficulties had been

for two days past surmounted ; and that I might have the licence for fetching. I sent up the letter to my beloved, with a repeated request for admittance to her presence upon it : but neither did this stand me in stead. I suppose she thought it would be allowing of the consequences that were naturally to be expected to follow the obtaining of this instrument, if she had consented to see me on the contents of this letter, having refused me that honor before I sent it up to her.—No surprising her.—No advantage to be taken of her inattention to the nicest circumstances.

* * * *

Didst ever see a licence, Belford ?

Edmund, by divine permission, Lord Bishop of London, to our well-beloved in Christ, Robert Lovelace, [your servant; my good lord ! What have I done to merit so much goodness, who never saw your lordship in my life ?] of the parish of St. Martin in the Fields, bachelor, and Clarissa Harlowe, of the same parish, spinster, sendeth greeting.—WHEREAS ye are, as is alleged, determined to enter into the holy state of matrimony [this is only alleged, thou observest] by and with the consent of, etc. etc. etc.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

WELL, but now my plots thicken ; and my employment of writing to thee on this subject will soon come to a conclusion. For now, having got the licence ; and Mrs. Townsend with her tars being to come to Hampstead next Wednesday or Thursday ; and another letter possibly or message from Miss Howe, to inquire how Miss Harlowe does, upon the rustic's report of her ill health, and to express her wonder that she has not heard from her in answer to hers on her escape ;—I must soon blow up the lady, or be blown up myself. And so I am preparing with Lady Betty and my cousin Montague, to wait upon my beloved with a coach and four, or a set ; for Lady Betty will not stir out with a pair, for the world : though but for two or three miles. And this is a well-known part of her character.

Thou hast seen Lady Betty Lawrence several times—hast thou not, Belford ?

No, never in my life.

But thou hast ;—why, Jack, knowest thou not Lady Betty's other name ?

Other name !—Has she two ?

She has. And what thinkest thou of Lady Bab Wallis ?

Now thou hast it. Lady Barbara, thou knowest, lifted up in circumstances, and by pride, never appears or produces herself

but on occasions special—to pass to men of quality or price, for a duchess, or countess, at least. She has always been admired for a grandeur in her air, that few women of quality can come up to: and never was supposed to be other than what she passed for; though often and often a paramour for lords.

An I who, thinkest thou, is my cousin Montague?

Why, my little Johanetta Golding, a lively, yet modest-looking girl, is my cousin Montague.

There, Belford—is an aunt!—There's a cousin!—Both have wit at will. Both are accustomed to ape quality. Both are genteelly descended. Mistresses of themselves, and well educated—yet past pity—true *Spartan* dames; ashamed of nothing but *detection*—always, therefore, upon their guard against that. And in their own conceit, when assuming top parts, the very quality they ape.

And how dost think I dress them out?—I'll tell thee.

Lady Betty in a rich gold tissue, adorned with jewels of high price.

My cousin Montague in a pale pink, standing on end with silver flowers of her own working. Charlotte, as well as my beloved, is admirable at her needle. Not quite so richly jewel'd out as Lady Betty; but ear-rings and solitaire very valuable, and infinitely becoming.

This sweet girl will half ruin me. But seest thou not by this time, that her reign is short!—It must be so. And Mrs. Sinclair has already prepared every thing for her reception once more.

* * * *

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

At Mrs. Sinclair's, Monday afternoon.

ALL'S right, as heart can wish!—in spite of all objection—in spite of a reluctance next to fainting—in spite of all foresight, vigilance, suspicion—once more is the charmer of my soul in her old lodgings!

But I have not time for the particulars of our management.

My beloved is now directing some of her clothes to be packed up—never more to enter this house! Nor ever more will she, I dare say, when once again out of it.

Yet not so much as a condition of forgiveness!—The Harlowe-spirited fair one will not *deserve* my mercy!—She will wait for Miss Howe's next letter; and then if she find a *difficulty in her new schemes* [thank her for nothing]—will—will what!—Why even *then* will take time to consider, whether I am to be forgiven

or for ever rejected. An indifference that revives in my heart the remembrance of a thousand of the like nature.—And yet Lady Betty and Miss Montague declare, that I ought to be satisfied with such a proud suspension.

They are entirely attached to her. Whatever she says, *is, must be*, gospel! They are guarantees for her return to Hampstead this night. They are to go back with her. A supper bespoken by Lady Betty at Mrs. Moore's. All the vacant apartments there, by my permission, (for I had engaged them for a month certain) to be filled with them and their attendants, for a week at least, or till they can prevail upon the dear perverse, as they hoped they shall, to restore me to her favour, and to accompany Lady Betty to the Oxfordshire.

The dear creature has thus far condescended—that she will write to Miss Howe, and acquaint her with the present situation of things.

If she writes, I shall see what she writes. But I believe she will have other employment soon.

Lady Betty is sure, she tells her, that she shall prevail upon her to forgive me; though she dares say, that I deserve not forgiveness. Lady Betty is too delicate to inquire strictly into the nature of my offence. But it must be an offence against *herself*, against *Miss Montague*, against the *virtuous of the whole sex*, or or it could not be so highly resented. Yet she will not leave her till she forgive me, and till she see our nuptials privately celebrated. Meantime, as she approves of her *uncle's expedient*, she will address her as *already my wife before strangers*.

Stedman her solicitor may attend her for orders, in relation to her chancery affair, at Hampstead. Not one hour they *can* be favoured with, will they lose from the company and conversation of so dear, so charming a new relation.

Hard then if she had not obliged them with her company, in their coach and four, to and from their cousin Leeson's, who longed (as they themselves had done) to see a lady so justly celebrated.

* * * *

What shall we do now! We are immersed in the depth of grief and apprehension! How ill do women bear disappointment!—Set upon going to Hampstead, and upon quitting for ever a house she re-entered with infinite reluctance; what things she intended to take with her, ready packed up; herself on tip-toe to be gone; and I prepared to attend her thither; she begins to be afraid, that she shall not go this night; and in grief and despair has flung herself in her old apartment; locked herself in; and through the key-hole Dorcas sees her on her knees—praying. I suppose, for a safe deliverance,

And from what?—And wherefore these agonizing apprehensions?

Why, here, this unkind Lady Betty, *with* the dear creature's knowledge, though to her concern, and this mad-headed cousin Montague *without* it, while she was employed in directing her package, have hurried away in the coach to their own lodgings [only indeed to put up some night-clothes, and so forth, in order to attend their sweet cousin to Hampstead;] and, no less to my surprise than hers, are not yet returned.

I have sent to know the meaning of it.

In a great hurry of spirits, she would have had me to go myself. Hardly any pacifying her!—The girl, God bless her! is wild with her own idle apprehensions!—What is she afraid of?

I curse them both for their delay—my tardy villain, how he stays!—Devil fetch them!—Let them send their coach, and we'll go without them. In her hearing I bid the fellow tell them so.—Perhaps he stays to bring the coach, if anything happens to hinder the ladies from attending my beloved this night.

* * * *

Devil take them, again say I! They *promised* too they would not stay, because it was but two nights ago, that a chariot was robbed at the foot of Hampstead Hill; which alarmed my fair-one when told of it.

Oh! here's Lady Betty's servant, with a billet.

To Robert Lovelace, Esq.

Monday night.

EXCUSE us, dear nephew, I beseech you, to my dearest niece. One night cannot break squares. For here Miss Montague has been taken violently ill with three fainting fits, one after another.

If she be better, we will certainly go with you to-morrow morning, after we have breakfasted with *her*, at your lodgings. But whether she be, or not, I will do myself the pleasure to attend your lady to Hampstead; and will be with you for that purpose about nine in the morning. With due compliments to your most worthily beloved, I am

Yours affectionately

ELIZAB. LAWRENCE.

Faith and troth, Jack, I know not what to do with myself: for here, just now having sent in the above note by Dorcas, out came my beloved with it in her hand: in a fit of phrensy!—True, by my soul.

She had indeed complained of *her head* all the evening.

Dorcas ran to me, out of breadth, to tell me that her lady was coming in some strange way: but she followed her so quick, that the frightened wench had not time to say in what way.

It seems when she read the billet—Now indeed, said she, am I a lost creature; O the poor Clarissa Harlowe!

She tore off her head-dress: inquired where I was: and in she came, her shining tresses flowing about her neck, her ruffles torn, and hanging in tatters about her snowy hands; with her arms spread out; her eyes wildly turned, as if starting from their orbits—down sunk she at my feet, as soon as she approached me; her charming bosom heaving to her uplifted face; and clasping her arms about my knees, Dear Lovelace, said she, if ever—if ever—if ever—and, unable to speak another word, quitting her clasping hold, down prostrate on the floor sunk she, neither in a fit nor out of one.

I was quite astonished.—All my purposes suspended for a few moments, I knew neither what to say, nor what to do. But, recollecting myself, am I *again*, thought I, in a way to be overcome, and made a fool of!—If I now recede, I am gone for ever.

I raised her; but down she sunk, as if quite disjointed; her limbs failing her—yet not in a fit neither. I never heard of or saw such a dear unaccountable: almost lifeless, and speechless too, for a few moments: what must her apprehensions be at that moment? And for what?—An high-notioned dear soul!—Pretty ignorance!—thought I.

Never having met with so sincere, so unquestionable a repugnance, I was staggered—I was confounded—yet how should I know that it would be so till I tried?—And how, having proceeded thus far, could I stop, were I *not* to have had the women to goad me on, and to make light of circumstances, which they pretended to be better judges of than I?

I lifted her, however, into a chair; and in words of disordered passion, told her, all her fears were needless: wondered at them: begged of her to be pacified: besought her reliance on my faith and honour: and revoked all my old vows, and poured forth new ones.

At last, with an heart-breaking sob, I see, I see, Mr. Lovelace, in broken sentences she spoke—I see, I see,—that at last—at last—I am ruined!—Ruined, if *your* pity—let me implore your pity!—And down on her bosom, like a half-broken-stalked lily, top-heavy with the overcharging dews of the morning, sunk her head, with a sigh that went to my heart.

All I could think of to re-assure her, when a little recovered, I said.

Why did I not send for their coach, as I had intimated? It might return in the morning for the ladies.

Dreading what might happen as to her intellects, and being very apprehensive, that she might possibly go through a great deal before morning, I humoured her, and ordered Will to endeavour to get a coach directly, to carry us to Hampstead; I cared not at what price.

Robbers, with whom I would have terrified her, she feared not—I was all her fear, I found; and this house her terror: for I saw plainly, that she now believed that Lady Betty and Miss Montague were both impostors.

But her mistrust is a little of the latest to do her service!

And, O Jack, the rage of love, the rage of revenge is upon me! By turns they tear me!—The progress already made—the women's instigations—the power I shall have to try her to the utmost, and still to marry her, if she be not to be brought to cohabitation—let me perish, Belford, if she escape me now!

* * * *

Will is not yet come back. Near eleven.

* * * *

Will is this moment returned.—No coach to be got, either for love or money.

Once more, she urges—To Mrs. Leeson's let me go, Lovelace! Good Lovelace, let me go to Mrs. Leeson's! What is Miss Montague's illness to my terror?—For the Almighty's sake, Mr. Lovelace!—her hands clasped—

O my angel! what a wildness is this!—Do you know, do you see, my dearest life, what appearance your causeless apprehensions have given you?—Do you know it is past eleven o'clock?

Twelve, one, two, three, four—any hour—I care not—if you mean me honourably, let me go out of this hated house!

Just as she had repeated the last words, *if you mean me honourably, let me go out of this hated house*, in came Mrs. Sinclair, in a great ferment—And what, pray, madam, has *this house* done to you?—Mr. Lovelace, you have known me some time; and if I have not the niceness of this lady, I hope I do not deserve to be treated thus?

The old dragon straddled up to her, with her arms kemboed again—her eyebrows erect, like the bristles upon a hog's back, and, scowling over her shortened nose, more than half-hid her ferret eyes. Her mouth was distorted. She pouted out her blubber-lips, as if to bellows up wind and sputter into her horse-nostrils; and her chin was curdled, and more than usually prominent with passion.

With two *hoh-madams* she accosted the frightened fair-one; who, terrified, caught hold of my sleeve.

I feared she would fall into fits; and, with a look of indignation, told Mrs. Sinclair, that these apartments were mine; and I

could not imagine what she meant, either by listening to what passed between me and my spouse, or to come in uninvited ; and still more I wondered at her giving herself these strange liberties.

I may be to blame, Jack, for suffering this wretch to give herself these airs ; but her coming in was without my orders.

The old beldam, throwing herself into a chair, fell a blubbering and exclaiming. And the pacifying of her, and endeavouring to reconcile the lady to her, took up till near one o'clock.

And thus, between terror, and the late hour, and what followed, she was diverted from the thoughts of getting out of the house to Mrs. Leeson's, or any where else.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

Tuesday morn. June 13.

AND now, Belford, I can go no further. The affair is over. Clarissa lives. And I am.

Your humble servant,
R. LOVELACE.

The whole of this black transaction is given by the injured lady to Miss Howe, in her subsequent letters dated Thursday, July 6.

Mr. Belford to Robert Lovelace, Esq.

Watford, Wedn. June. 14.

O THOU savage-hearted monster ! What work hast thou made in *one guilty hour*, for a *whole age* of repentance !

I am inexpressibly concerned at the fate of this matchless lady ! She could not have fallen into the hands of any other man breathing, and suffered as she had done with thee.

I can tell thee, it is well either for thee or for me, that I am not the brother of the lady. Had I been her brother, her violation must have been followed by the blood of one us.

Poor, poor lady ! with such noble qualities as would have adorned the most exalted married life, to fall into the hands of the *only* man in the world, who could have treated her as thou hast treated her !—And to let loose the old dragon, as thou properly callest her, upon the before-affrighted innocent, what a barbarity was *that* ! What a *poor* piece of barbarity ! in order to obtain by terror, what thou despirest to gain by love, though supported by stratagems the most insidious !

O LOVELACE ! LOVELACE ! *had I doubted it before, I*

should now be convinced, that there must be a WORLD AFTER THIS, to do justice to injured merit, and to punish barbarous perfidy! Could the divine SOCRATES, and the divine CLARISSA, otherwise have suffered?

But pry'thee, dear Lovelace, if thou'rt a man, and not a devil, resolve, immediately, to repair thy sin of ingratitude, by conferring upon thyself the highest honour thou *canst* receive, in making her lawfully thine.

My dear Lovelace: be honest: and let me present thee with the brightest jewel that man ever possessed; and then, body and soul, wilt thou bind to thee for ever, thy

BELFORD.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

Thursday, June 15.

LET me alone, you great dog, you!—Let me alone!—I have heard a lesser boy, his coward arms held over his head and face, say to a bigger, who was pommelling him, for having run away with his apple, his orange, or his gingerbread.

Well, but, after all, I must own, that there is something very singular in this lady's case: and, at times, I cannot help regretting, that I ever attempted her; since not *one power either of body or soul* could be moved in my favour: and since, to use the expression of the philosopher, on a much graver occasion, there is no difference to be found between the skull of King Philip, and that of another man.

But people's extravagant notions of things alter not *facts*, Belford: and, when all's done, Miss Clarissa Harlowe has but run the fate of a thousand others of her sex—only that they did not set such a romantic value upon what they call their *honour*; that's all.

So, Belford, thou seest, that I have journeyed on to this stage [indeed, through infinite mazes, and as infinite remorse] with one determined point in view, from the first. To thy urgent supplication then, that I will do her grateful justice by marriage, let me answer in Matt. Prior's two lines on his hoped-for auditorship; as put into the mouths of his St. John and Harley;

—Let that be done, which Matt. doth say,
YEA, quoth the earl—BUT NOT TO DAY.

Thou seest, Jack, that I make no resolutions however, against doing her, one time or other, the wished-for justice, even were I to succeed in my principal view, *co-habitation*. And of this I do assure thee, that if I ever marry, it must, it shall be Miss Clarissa

Harlowe. —Nor is her honour at all impaired with *me*, by what she has *so far* suffered: but the contrary. She must only take care, that, if she be at last brought to forgive me, she shew me, that her Lovelace is the only man on earth, whom she could have forgiven on the like occasion.

But, ah, Jack, what, in the meantime, shall I do with this admirable creature? At present—she is quite stupefied.

I had rather, methinks, she should have retained all her active powers, though I had suffered by her nails and her teeth, than that she should be sunk into such a state of absolute—insensibility (shall I call it?) as she has been in ever since Tuesday morning. Yet, as she begins a little to revive, and now and then to call names, and to exclaim, I dread almost to engage with the anguish of a spirit that owes its extraordinary agitations to a niceness that has no example either in ancient or modern story. For, after all, what is there in her case that should *stupefy* such a glowing, such a *blooming* charmer?—Excess of grief, excess of terror, has made a person's hair stand on end, and even (as we have read) changed the colour of it. But that it should so stupefy, as to make a person, at times, insensible to those imaginary wrongs, which would raise others *from* stupefaction, is very surprising!

But I will leave this subject, lest it should make me too grave.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

I HAVE just now had a specimen of what the resentment of this dear creature will be when quite recovered: an affecting one!—For entering her apartment after Dorcas; and endeavouring to soothe and pacify her disordered mind; in the midst of my blandishments, she held up to heaven, in a speechless agony, the innocent licence (which she has in her own power.)

She seemed about to call down vengeance upon me; when happily the leaden god, in pity to her trembling Lovelace, waved over her half-drowned eyes his somniferous wand, and laid asleep the fair exclaimer, before she could go half through with her intended implication.

Thou wilt guess by what I have written, that some *little* art has been made use of: but it was with a *generous* design, (if thou'lt allow me the word on such an occasion) in order to lessen the too quick sense she was likely to have of what she was to suffer. A contrivance I never had occasion for before, and had not thought of now, if Mrs. Sinclair had not proposed it to me: to whom I left the management of it: and I have done nothing but curse her ever since, lest the quantity should have for ever *damped* her charming intellects

Cæsar never knew what it was to be *hipped*, I will call it, till he came to be what Pompey was, that is to say, till he arrived at the height of his ambition : nor did thy Lovelace know what it was to be gloomy, till he had completed his wishes upon the most charming creature in the world.

And yet why say I *completed*? when the *will*, the *consent*, is wanting—and I have still views before me of obtaining that?

And yet I could almost join with thee in the wish, which thou sendest me up by thy servant, unfriendly as it is, that I had had thy misfortune before Monday night last : for here the poor lady has run into a contrary extreme to that I told thee of in my last : for now is she as much too lively, as before she was too stupid : and 'bating that she has pretty frequent lucid intervals, would be deemed raving mad, and I should be obliged to confine her.

I am most confoundedly disturbed about it. for I begin to fear that her intellects are irreparably hurt.

I do all in my power to quiet her spirits, when I force myself into her presence.

I go on, begging pardon one minute ; and vowing truth and honour another.

I would at first have persuaded her, and offered to call witnesses to the truth of it, that we were actually married, though the licence was in her hands, I thought the assertion might go down in her disorder ; and charming consequences I hoped would follow. But this would not do.—

I therefore gave up that hope : and now I declare to her, that it is my resolution to marry her, the moment her uncle Harlowe informs me, that he will grace the ceremony with his presence.

But she believes nothing I say ; nor (whether in her senses, or not) bears me with patience in her sight.

I pity her with all my soul ; and I curse myself, when she is in her wailing fits, and when I apprehend, that intellects, so charming, are for ever damped.

But more I curse these women, who put me upon such an expedient ! Lord ! Lord ! what a hand have I made of it !—*And all for what ?*

Last night, for the first time since Monday last, she got to her pen and ink ; but she pursues her writing with such eagerness and hurry, as shew too evidently her discomposure.

I hope, however, that this employment will help to calm her spirits.

* * * *

Just now Dorcas tell me, that what she writes she tears, and throws the paper in fragments under the table, either as not knowing what she does, or disliking it : then gets up, wrings her

hands, weeps, and shifts her seat all round the room: then returns to her table, sits down and writes again.

* * * *

One odd letter, as I may call it, Dorcas has this moment given me from her—*Carry this*, said she, *to the vilest of men*, Dorcas, a toad, brought it, without any further direction, to me. I sat down intending (although 'tis pretty long) to give thee a copy of it: but, for my life, I cannot: 'tis so extravagant. And the original is too much an original to let it go out of my hands.

But some of the scraps and fragments, as either torn through, or flung aside, I will copy, for the novelty of the thing, and to shew thee how her mind works now she is in this whimsical way.

By the first thou'lt guess, that I have told her, that Miss Howe is very ill, and can't write; that she may account the better for not having received the letter designed for her.

PAPER I.

(*Torn in two pieces.*)

MY DEAREST MISS HOWE!

O WHAT dreadful things have I to tell you! But yet I cannot tell you neither. But say are you really ill, as a vile, vile creature informs me you are?

But he never yet told me the truth, and I hope has not in this and yet, if it were not true, surely I should have heard from you before now!—But what have I to do to upbraid?—You may well be tired of me!—And if you are, I can forgive you: for I am tired of myself: and all my own relations were tired of me long before you were.

How good you have always been to me, mine own dear Anna Howe!—But how I ramble!

I sat down to say a great deal—my heart was full—I did not know what to say first—and thought, and grief, and confusion, and (O my poor head) I cannot tell what—and thought, and grief, and confusion, came crowding so thick upon me; *one* would be first, *all* would be first; so I can write nothing at all.—Only that, whatever they have done to me, I cannot tell; but I am no longer what I was in any one thing—in any one thing did I say! Yes, but I am; for I am still, and I ever shall be,

Your true—

PAPER II.

(*Scratched through and thrown under the table.*)

—AND can you, my dear honoured papa, resolve for ever to

reprobate your poor child?—But I am sure you would not, if you knew what she has suffered since her unhappy—and will nobody plead for your poor suffering girl?—No one good body?—Why then, dearest sir, let it be an act of your own innate goodness, which I have so much experienced, and so much abused. I don't presume to think you should receive me—no indeed—my name is—I don't know what my name is!—I never, dare to wish to come into your family again!—but your heavy curse, my papa,—yes, I *will* call you papa, and help yourself as you can—for you are my own dear papa, whither you will or not—and though I am an unworthy child—yet I *am* your child—

PAPER III.

How art thou now humbled in the dust, thou proud Clarissa Harlowe! Thou that never steppedst out of thy father's house, but to be admired! Who wert wont to turn thine eye, sparkling with healthful life, and self-assurance, to different objects at once as thou passedst, as if (for so thy penetrating sister used to say) to plume thyself upon the expected applauses of all that beheld thee! Thou that used to go to rest satisfied with the adulations paid thee in the past day, and couldst put off everything but thy vanity!—

PAPER IV.

REJOICE not now, my Bella, my sister, my friend; but pity the humbled creature, whose foolish heart you used to say you beheld through the thin veil of humility which covered it.

It must have been so! My fall had not else been permitted—

You penetrated my proud heart with the jealousy of an elder sister's searching eye.

You knew me better than I knew myself.

Hence your upbraidings and your chidings, when I began to totter.

But forgive now those vain triumphs of my heart.

I thought, poor proud wretch that I was, that what you said was owing to your envy.

I thought I could acquit my intention of any such vanity.

I was too secure in the knowledge I thought I had of my own heart.

My supposed advantages became a snare to me.

And what now is the end of all?—

PAPER V.

WHAT now is become of the prospects of a happy life, which once I thought opening before me?—Who now shall assist in the solemn preparations? Who now shall provide the nuptial ornaments, which soften and divert the apprehensions of the fearful virgin? No court now to be paid to my smiles! No encouraging compliments to inspire thee with hope of laying a mind not unworthy of thee under obligation! No elevation now for conscious merit, and applauded purity, to look down from on a prostrate adorer, and an admiring world, and up to pleased and rejoicing parents and relations!

PAPER VI.

THOU pernicious caterpillar, that preyest upon the fair leaf of virgin fame, and poisonest those leaves which thou canst not devour.

Thou fell blight, thou eastern blast, thou overspreading mildew, that destroyest the early promises of the shining year! that mockest the laborious toil, and blastest the joyful hopes, of the painful husbandman!

Thou fretting moth, that corruptest the fairest garment!

Thou eating canker-worm, that prayest upon the opening bud, and turnest the damask rose into livid yellowness!

If, as religion teaches us, God will judge us, in a great measure, by our benevolent or evil actions to one another—O wretch! bethink thee, in time bethink thee, how great must be thy condemnation!

PAPER VII.

HAD the happiness of any, the poorest outcast in the world, whom I had never seen, never known, never before heard of, laid as much in *my* power, as my happiness did in *yours*, my benevolent heart would have made me fly to the succour of such a poor distressed—with what pleasure would I have raised the dejected head, and comforted the desponding heart!—But who now shall pity the poor wretch, who has increased instead of diminished, the number of the miserable!

But in the letter she wrote to me, there are yet greater extravagances, and though I said it was too affecting to give thee a copy of it, yet, after I have let thee see the loose papers inclosed, I think I may throw in a transcript of that. Dorcas therefore shall here transcribe it. *I cannot.* The reading of it affected

me ten times more than the severest reproaches of a regular mind could do.

To Mr. Lovelace.

never intended to write another line to you. I would not see you, if I could help it—O that I never had!

But tell me of a truth, is Miss Howe really and truly ill?—Very ill?—And is not her illness poison? and don't you know who gave it her?

What you, or Mrs. Sinclair, or somebody, (I cannot tell who) have done to my poor head, you best know; but I shall never be what I was. My head is gone. I have wept away all my brain, I believe; for I can weep no more. Indeed I have had my full share; so it is no matter.

But, good now, Lovelace, don't set Mrs. Sinclair upon me again. I never did her any harm. She *so* affrights me, when I see her!—Ever since—when was it? I cannot tell. *You* can, I suppose. She may be a good woman, as far as I know. She was the wife of a man of honour—very likely—though forced to let lodgings for her livelihood. Poor gentlewoman! Let her know I pity her: but don't let her come near me again—pray don't!

Yet she may be a very good woman—

What would I say!—I forget what I was going to say.

O Lovelace, you are Satan himself; or he helps you out in every thing; and that's as bad!

But have you really and trully sold yourself to him? And for how long?—What duration is your reign to have?

Poor man! the contract *will* be out: and then what will be your fate!

O Lovelace! if you could be sorry for yourself, I would be sorry too—but when all my doors are fast, and nothing but the key-hole open, and the key of late put into that, to be where you are, in a manner without opening any of them—O wretched, wretched Clarissa Harlowe!

For I never will be Lovelace—let my uncle take it as he pleases.

Well, but now I remember what I was going to say—it is for *your* good—not *mine*—for nothing can do me good now!—O thou villainous man! thou hated Lovelace!

But Mrs. Sinclair may be a good woman—if you love me—but that you don't—but don't let her bluster up with her worse than mannish airs to me again! O she is a frightful woman! If she *be* a woman! She needed not to put on that *fearful mask* to

scare me out of my poor wits. But don't tell her what I say—have no hatred to her—it is only fright and foolish fear, that's all. —She may not *be* a bad woman—but neither are all *men*, any more than all *women* alike—God forbid they should be like you!

Alas! you have killed my head among you—I don't say who did it! God forgive you all!—But had it not been better to have put me out of all your ways at once? You might safely have done it! For nobody would require me at your hands—no, not a soul except, indeed, Miss Howe would have said, when she should see you, What, Lovelace, have you done with Clarissa Harlowe?—And then you could have given any slight gay answer—sent her beyond sea; or she has run away from me, as she did from her parents. And this would have been easily credited; for you know, Lovelace, she that could run away from *them*, might very well run away from *you*.

But this is nothing to what I wanted to say. Now I have it.

I have lost it again—this foolish wench comes teasing me—For what purpose should I eat? For what end should I wish to live? I tell thee, Dorcas, I will neither eat nor drink. I cannot be worse than I am.

I will do as you'd have me—good Dorcas, look not upon me so fiercely—but thou canst not look so bad as I have seen somebody look.

Mr. Lovelace, now that I remember what I took pen in hand to say, let me hurry off my thoughts, lest I lose them again—here I am sensible—and yet I am hardly sensible, neither—but I know my head is not as it should be, for all that—therefore let me propose one thing to you: it is for *your* good—not *mine*: and this is it:

I must needs be both a trouble and an expense to you. And here my uncle Harlowe, when he knows how I am, will never wish any man to have me: no, not even *you*, who have been the occasion of it—barbarous and ungrateful!—A less complicated villany, cost a Tarquin—but I forget what I would say again—

Then *this* is it—I never shall be myself again: I have been a very wicked creature—a vain, proud, poor creature full of secret pride—which I carried off under an humble guise, and deceived every body—my sister says so—and now I am punished—so let me be carried out of this house, and out of your sight; and let me be put into that Bedlam privately, which once I saw: but it was a sad sight to me then! Little as I thought what I should come to *myself*!—That is all I would say: this is all I have to wish for—then I shall be out of all your ways: and I shall be taken care of; and bread and water without your tormentings, will be dainties; and my straw-bed the easiest I have lain in—for—I cannot tell how long!

My clothes will sell for what will keep me there, perhaps as long as I shall live. But, Lovelace, *dear* Lovelace, I will call you; for you have cost me enough, I'm sure!—don't let me be made a show of for my *family's* sake; nay, for your *own* sake, don't do that—for when I know all I have suffered, which yet I do not, and no matter if I never do—I may be apt to rave against you by name, and tell of all your baseness to a poor humbled creature, that once was as proud as any body—but of what I can't tell—except of my own folly and vanity—but let that pass—since I am punished enough for it—

So suppose, instead of Bedlam, it were a private mad-house, where nobody comes!—That will be better a great deal.

* * * *

A little interval seems to be lent me. I had begun to look over what I have written. It is not fit for any one to see, so far as I have been able to reperuse it: but my head will not hold, I doubt, to go through it all. If, therefore, I have not already mentioned my earnest desire, let me tell you, it is *this*: that I be sent out of this abominable house without delay, and locked up in some private madhouse about this town; for such it seems there are; never more to be seen, or to be produced to any body, except in your own vindication, if you should be charged with the murder of my person; a much lighter crime than that of my honour, which the greatest villain on earth has robbed me of. And deny me not this my last request, I beseech you; and one other, and that is, never to let me see you more! This surely may be granted to

The miserably abused

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

I will not bear thy heavy preachments, Belford, upon this affecting letter. So, not a word of that sort! The paper, thou'lt see, is blistered with the tears even of the hardened transcriber: which has made her ink run here and there.

* * * *

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq,

Sunday afternoon, 6 o'clock, (June 18.)

I WENT out early this morning, and returned not till just now when I was informed, that my beloved, in my absence, had taken it into her head to attempt to get away.

She tripped down, with a parcel tied up in a handkerchief her hat on; and was actually in the entry, when Mrs. Sinclair saw her.

Pray madam, whipping between her and the street-door, be pleased to let me know whither you are going ?

Who has a right to control me ? was the word.

I have, madam, by order of your spouse, and kemboing her arms, as she owned, I desire you will be pleased to walk up again.

She would have spoken ; but could not ; and, bursting into tears, turned back, and went up to her chamber ; and Dorcas was taken to task for suffering her to be in the passage before she was seen.

This shews, as we hoped last night, that she is recovering her charming intellects.

* * * *

This moment Dorcas tells me, she believes she is coming to find me out. She asked her after me : and Dorcas left her, drying her red-swoln eyes at her glass, sighing too sensibly for my courage. But to what purpose have I gone thus far, if I pursue not my principal end ? Niceness must be a little abated. She knows the worst. That she cannot fly me : that she must see me ; and that I can look her into a sweet confusion ; are circumstances greatly in my favour. What can she do, but rave and exclaim ?—I am used to raving and exclaiming—but, if recovered, I shall see how she behaves upon this our first sensible interview after what she has suffered.

Here she comes.

Sunday night.

NEVER blame me for giving way to have art used with this admirable creature. All the princes of the air, or beneath it, joining with me, could never have subdued her while she had her senses.

She came up with quick steps, pretty close to me ; a white handkerchief in her hand ; her eyes neither fierce nor mild, but very earnest ; and a fixed sedateness in her whole aspect, which seemed to be the effect of deep contemplation : and thus she accosted me with an air and action that I never saw equalled.

You see before you, sir, the wretch, whose preference of you to all your sex, you have rewarded—as it indeed *deserved* to be rewarded. My father's dreadful curse has already operated upon me in the very letter of it, as to this life ; and it seems to me too evident, that it will not be your fault, that it is not entirely completed in the loss of my soul, as well as of my honour—which you, villainous man ! have robbed me of, with a baseness so unnatural, so inhuman, that it seems, you, even *you*, had not the heart to attempt it, till my senses were made the previous sacrifice.

Here I made an hesitating effort to speak, laying down my pen : but she proceeded !—Hear me out, guilty wretch !—abandoned

man!—*Man* did I say?—Yet what name else can I? since the mortal worryings of the fiercest beast would have been more natural, and infinitely more welcome, than what you have acted by me; and that with a premeditation and contrivance worthy only of that single heart, which now, *base* as well as ungrateful as thou art, seems to quake within thee.—And well mayest thou quake; well mayest thou tremble and falter, and hesitate, as thou dost, when thou reflectest upon what I have suffered for thy sake, and upon the returns thou hast made me!

My dear—my love—I—I—I never—no never—lips trembling, limbs quaking, voice inward, hesitating, broken—never surely did miscreant look so *like* a miscreant! While thus she proceeded, waving her snowy hand, with all the graces of moving oratory.

I have no pride in the confusion visible in thy whole person. I have been all the day praying for a composure, if I could not escape from this vile house, that should once more enable me to look up to my destroyer with the consciousness of an innocent sufferer. Thou seest me, since my wrongs are beyond the power of *words to express*, thou seest me, *calm enough* to wish, that thou mayest continue harassed by the workings of thy own conscience, till effectual repentance take hold of thee, that so thou mayest not forfeit all title to *that* mercy which thou hast not shewn to the poor creature now before thee, who had so well deserved to meet with a faithful friend, where she met with the worst of enemies.

But tell me, (for no doubt thou hast *some* scheme to pursue) tell me, since I am a prisoner, as I find, in the vilest of houses, and have not a friend to protect or save me, what thou intendest shall become of the remnant of a life not worth the keeping!—Tell me, if yet there are more evils reserved for me; and whether thou hast entered into a compact with the grand deceiver, in the person of of his horrid agent in this house; and if the ruin of my soul, that my father's curse may be fulfilled, is to complete the triumphs of so vile a confederacy?—Answer me!—Say, if thou hast courage to speak out to her whom thou hast ruined, tell me what *further* I am to suffer from thy barbarity?

As I told thee, I had prepared myself for high passions, raving, flying, tearing, execration: these transient violences, the workings of sudden grief, and shame and vengeance, would have set us upon a par with each other, and quitted scores. But such a majestic composure—seeking me—whom yet, it is plain, by her attempt to get away, she would have avoided seeing—no Lucretia-like vengeance upon herself in her thought—yet swallowed up, her whole mind swallowed up, as I may say, by a grief so heavy, as, in her own words, to be beyond the power of speech to express—and to be able, discomposed as she was, to the very morning, to put such a home-questic n to me, as if she had penetrated my future view—

how could I avoid looking like a fool, and answering, as before, in broken sentences, and confusion?

What—what-a—what has been done—I, I, I—cannot but say—must own—must confess—hem—hem—is not right—is not what should have been—but-a—but—but—I am truly—truly—sorry for it—upon my soul I am—and—and—will do all—do everything—do what—whatever is incumbent upon me—all that you—that you—that you shall require to make you amends!—

O Belford! Belford! Whose the triumph now! **HERS, or MINE?**

Amends! O thou truly despicable wretch!—Then lifting up her eyes—Good heaven!—who shall pity the creature who could fall by so base a mind!—Yet—and then she looked indignantly upon me!—Yet, I hate thee not (base and lousouled, as thou art!) half so much as I hate myself, that I saw thee not sooner in thy proper colours!—

Thou wouldst tell me, I suppose—I know what thou would'st tell me—but thinkest thou, that *marriage will satisfy for a guilt like thine!* Destitute as thou hast made me both of friends and fortune, I too much despise the wretch, *who could rob himself of his wife's virtue*, to endure the thoughts of thee, in the light thou seemest to hope I will accept thee in!—

I hesitated an interruption: but my meaning died away upon my trembling lips. I could only pronounce the word *marriage*—and thus she proceeded:

Let me therefore know, whether I am to be controlled in the future disposal of myself! Whether, in a country of liberty, as *this*, where the *sovereign* of it must not be guilty of *your* wickedness, and were *you* neither durst have attempted it, had I one friend or relation to look upon me; I am to be kept here a prisoner, to sustain fresh injuries? Whether, in a word, you intend to hinder me from going whither my destiny shall lead me?

And, saying this, she flung from me; leaving me absolutely shocked and confounded.

Monday morning, 5 o'clock (June 19.)

I *must* write on. Nothing else can divert me: and I think thou canst not have been a dog to me.

* * * *

At day-dawn I looked through the key-hole of my beloved's door. She had declared she would not put off her clothes any more in this house. There I beheld her in a sweet slumber, which I hope will prove refreshing to her disturbed senses; sitting in her elbow-chair, her apron over her head; her head supported by one sweet hand, the other hand hanging down upon her side, in a sleepy lifelessness; half of one pretty foot only visible.

See the differences in our cases! thought I: she the charming injured, can sweetly sleep, while the varlet injurer cannot close

his eyes ; and has been trying to no purpose the whole night to divert his melancholy, and to fly from himself !

Nine o'clock.

CONFOUNDED art, cunning, villainy !— By my soul, she had like to have slipt through my fingers !

Had she been in the forehouse, and no passage to go through to get at the street door, she had certainly been gone. But her haste betrayed her ; for Sally Martin happening to be in the fore parlour, and hearing a swifter motion than usual, and a rustling of silks, as if from somebody in a hurry, looked out ; and seeing who it was, stept between her and the door, and set her back against it.

You must not go, madam. Indeed you must not. By what right ?—And how dare you ?—And such like imperious airs the dear creature gave herself.—While Sally called out for her aunt ; and half a dozen voices joined instantly in the cry, for me to hasten down, to hasten down in a moment.

As soon as she saw me, she stept a pace or two towards me ; Mr. Lovelace, I *will* go ! said she—do you authorize these women—what right have they, or *you* either, to stop me ?

I desired them to leave us, all but Dorcas, who was down as soon as I. I then thought it right to assume an air of resolution, having found my tameness so greatly triumphed over. And now, my dear, said I (urging her reluctant feet) be pleased to walk into the fore parlour. Here, since you will not go up stairs ; here we may *hold our parley* ; and Dorcas *be witness to it*,—And now, madam, seating her, and sticking my hands in my sides, your pleasure !

Insolent villian ! said the furious lady. And rising, ran to the window, and threw up the sash [she knew not, I suppose, that they were iron rails before the windows]. And, when she found she could not get out into the street, clasping her uplifted hands together, having dropt her parcel—for the love of God, good honest man !—For the love of God, mistress—[to two passers by] a poor, a poor creature, said she, ruined !—

I clasped her in my arms, people beginning to gather about the window : and then she cried out, Murder ! Help ! Help !—And carried her up to the dining-room, in spite of her little plotting heart (as I may now call it) although she violently struggled, catching hold of the banisters here and there, as she could. I would have seated her there ; but she sunk down half motionless, pale as ashes. And a violent burst of tears happily relieved her.

Dorcas wept over her. The wench was actually moved for her.

Violently hysterics succeeded. I left her to Mabel, Dorcas and Polly; the latter the most supportable to her of the sisterhood.

This attempt, so resolutely made, alarmed me not a little.

Mrs. Sinclair and her nymphs, are much more concerned; because of the *reputation* of their house, as they call it, having received some insults (broken windows threatened) to make them produce the young creature who cried out.

While the mobbish inquisitors were in the height of their office, the women came running up to me, to know what they should do; a constable being actually fetched.

Get the constable into the parlour, said I, with three or four of the forwardest of the mob, and produce one of the nymphs, onion-eyed, in a moment, with disordered head-dress and handkerchief, and let her own herself the person: the occasion, a female skirmish; but satisfied with the justice done her. Then give a dram or two to each fellow, and all will be well.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

I HAVE this moment intelligence from Simon Parsons, one of my Lord M.'s stewards, that his lordship is very ill. Simon, who is my obsequious servant, in virtue of my presumptive heirship, gives me a hint in his letter, that my presence at M. Hall, will not be amiss. So, I must accelerate, whatever be the course I shall be allowed or compelled to take.

No bad prospects for this charming creature, if the old peer would be so kind as to surrender; and many a summons has his gout given him. A good 10,000*l.* a year, and perhaps the title reversionary, would help me up with her.

* * * *

BUT now, at last, am I to be admitted to the presence of my angry fair-one: after three denials, nevertheless; and a *peremptory* one from me, by Dorcas, that I must see her in her chamber if I cannot see her in the dining-room.

Dorcas, however, tells me that she says, if she were at her own liberty, she would never see me more; and that she had been asking after the characters and conditions of the neighbours. I suppose, now she has found her voice, to call out for help from them, if there were any to hear her.

She will have it now, it seems, that I had the wickedness from the very beginning, to contrive for her ruin, a house so convenient for dreadful mischief.

Dorcas has hinted to her my lord's illness, as a piece of intelligence that dropt in conversation from me.

But here I stop, My beloved, pursuant to my peremptory message, is just gone up into the dining-room.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

THERE is certainly a good deal in the observation, *that it costs a man ten times more pains to be wicked, than it would cost him to be good.* What a confounded number of contrivances have I had recourse to, in order to carry my point with this charming creature; and, after all, how have I puzzled myself by it; and yet am near tumbling into the pit which it was the end of all my plots to shun! What a happy man had I been with such an excellence, could I have brought my mind to marry when I first prevailed upon her to quit her father's house: but then, as I have often reflected, how had I known, that a but blossoming beauty, who could carry on a private correspondence, and run such risks with a notorious wild fellow, was not prompted by inclination, which one day might give such a free-liver as myself, as much pain to reflect upon, as, at the time, it gave me pleasure?

But to proceed with my narrative.

The dear creature resumed the topic her heart was so firmly fixed upon; and insisted upon quitting the *odious house*, and that in very high terms.

I urged her to meet me the next day at the altar in either of the two churches mentioned in the licence. And I besought her, whatever were her resolution, to let me debate this matter calmly with her.

If, she said, I would have her give what I desired the least moment's consideration, I must not hinder her from being her own mistress. To what purpose did I ask her *consent*, if she had not a power over either her own person or actions?

Will you give me your honour, madam, if I consent to your quitting a house so disagreeable to you?—

My honour, sir! said the dear creature—alas!—and turned weeping from me with inimitable grace—as if she had said—Alas! you have robbed me of my honour!

I hoped then, that her angry passions were subsiding; but I was mistaken: for, urging her warmly for the day; and that for the sake of our mutual honour, and the honour of both our families; in this high-flown and high-souled strain she answered me.

And canst thou, Lovelace, be so *mean*—as to wish to make a wife of the creature thou hast insulted, dishonoured, and abused, as thou hast me? Was it necessary to humble me down to the low level of thy baseness, before I could be a wife meet for thee? Thou hadst a father, who was a man of honour: a mother, who deserved a better son. Thou hast an uncle, who is no dishonour to the peerage of a kingdom, whose peers are more respectable than the nobility of any other country. Thou hast other relations also, who may be *thy* boast, though thou canst not be *theirs*—

and canst thou not imagine, that thou hearest them calling upon thee; the dead from their monuments; the living from their laudable pride; not to dishonour thy ancient and splendid house, by entering into wedlock with a creature whom thou hast levelled with the dirt of the street, and classed with the vilest of her sex?

I extolled her greatness of soul, and her virtue. I execrated myself for my guilt: and told her, how grateful to the *manes* of my ancestors, as well as to the wishes of the living, the honour I supplicated for would be.

But still she insisted upon being a free agent; of seeing herself in other lodgings before she would give what I urged the *least* consideration. Nor would she promise me favour even then, or to permit my visits. How then, as I asked her, could I comply, without resolving to lose her for ever?

Monday night.

How determined is this lady! Again had she liked to have escaped us! What a fixed resentment! She only, I find assumed a little calm, in order to quiet suspicion. She was got down, and actually had unbolted the street-door, before I could get to her; alarmed as I was by Mrs. Sinclair's cookmaid, who was the only one that saw her fly through the passage: yet lightning was not quicker than I.

Again I brought her back to the dining-room, with infinite reluctance on her part. And before her face, ordered a servant to be placed constantly at the bottom of the stairs for the future.

She seemed even choked with grief and disappointment.

Dorcas was exceedingly assiduous about her; and confidently gave it as her own opinion, that her dear lady should be permitted to go to another lodging, since this was so disagreeable to her: were she to be killed for saying so, she would say it. And was *good* Dorcas for this afterwards.

But for some time the dear creature was all passion and violence

I see, I see, said she, when I had brought her up: what I am to expect from your new professions, O vilest of men!

Have I offered to you, my beloved creature, any thing that can justify this impatience after a more hopeful calm?

She wrung her hands. She disordered her headdress. She tore her ruffles. She was in a perfect phrensy.

I dreaded her returning malady: but entreaty rather exasperating, I affected an angry air.—I bid her expect the worst she had to fear—and was menacing on, in hopes to intimidate her, when, dropping down at my feet,

‘Twill be a mercy, said she, the highest act of mercy you can do, to kill me outright upon this spot—this happy spot, as I will.

in my last moments, call it !—Then baring, with a still more frantic violence, part of her enchanting neck—Here, here, said the soul-harrowing beauty, let thy pointed mercy enter ! And I will thank thee, and forgive thee for all the dreadful past !—With my latest gasp I will forgive and thank thee !—Or help *me* to the means, and I will myself put out of thy way so miserable a wretch ! And bless thee for those means !

Why all this extravagant passion ? Why all these exclamations ? Have I offered any new injury to you, my dearest life ? What a phrensy is this ! Am I not ready to make you all the reparation that I *can* make you ? Had I not reason to hope—

No, no, no, no—half a dozen times, as fast as she could speak.

Had I not reason to hope, that you were meditating upon the means of making me happy, and yourself not miserable, rather than upon a flight so causeless and so precipitate ?—

No, no, no, no, as before, shaking her head with wild impatience, as resolved not to attend to what I said.

My resolutions are so honourable, if you will permit them to take effect, that I need not be solicitous whither you go, if you will but permit my visits, and receive my vows. And God is my witness, that I bring you not back from the door with any view to your dishonour, but the contrary : and this moment I will send for a minister to put an end to all your doubts and fears.

Say this, and say a thousand times more, and bind every word with a solemn appeal to that God whom thou art accustomed to invoke to the truth of the vilest falsehoods, and all will still be short of what thou hast vowed and promised to me. And were *not* my heart to abhor thee, and to rise against thee, for thy *perjuries*, as it *does*, I would not, I tell thee once more, I would not bind my soul in covenant with such a man, for a thousand worlds !

Compose yourself, however, madam ; for *your own sake*, compose yourself. Permit me to raise you up ; *abhorred* as I am of your soul !

Nay, if I must not touch you ; for she wildly slapped my hands ; but with such a sweet passionate air, her bosom heaving and throbbing as she looked up to me, that although I was most sincerely enraged, I could with transport have pressed her to mine.

If I must not touch you, I will not.—But depend upon it, [and I assumed the sternest air I could assume, to try what that would do] depend upon it, madam, that this is not the way to avoid the evils you dread. Let me do what I will, I cannot be used worse—Dorcas, begone !

She arose, Dorcas being about to withdraw ; and wildly caught hold of her arm : O Dorcas ! If thou art of mine own sex, leave

me not, I charge thee !—Then quitting Dorcas, down she threw herself upon her knees, in the furthest corner of the room, clasping a chair with her face laid upon the bottom of it ! O where can I—be safe ? Where, where can I be safe, from this man of violence ?

This gave Dorcas an opportunity to confirm herself in her lady's confidence : the wench threw herself at my feet, while I seemed in violent wrath ; and embracing my knees, Kill me, sir, kill me, sir, if you please !—I must throw myself in your way, to save my lady. I beg your pardon, sir—but you must be set on !—God forgive the mischief-makers !—But your own heart, if left to itself, would not permit these things spare, however, sir ! spare my lady, I beseech you !—bustling on her knees about me, as if I were intending to approach her lady, had I not been restrained by her.

This, humoured by me, Begone, devil !—Officious devil, begone !—startled the dear creature : who snatching up hastily her head from the chair, and as hastily popping it down again in terror, hit her nose, I suppose against the edge of the chair ; and it gushed out with blood, running in a stream down her bosom ; she herself too much affrighted to heed it !

Never was mortal man in such terror and agitations as I . for I instantly concluded, that she had stabbed herself with some concealed instrument.

I ran to her in a wild agony—for Dorcas was frightened out of all her mock interposition—

What have you done ! O what have you done !—Look up to me, my dearest life ! Sweet injured innocence, look up to me ! What have you done ! Long will I not survive you !—And I was upon the point of drawing my sword to dispatch myself, when I discovered that all I apprehended was but a bloody nose, which, as far as I know, (for it could not be stopped in a quarter of an hour) may have saved her head and her intellects.

But I see by this scene, that the sweet creature is but a pretty coward at bottom ; and that I can terrify her out of her virulence against me, whenever I put on sternness and anger. But then, as a qualifier to the advantage this gives me over her, I find myself to be a coward too, which I had not before suspected, since I was capable of being so easily terrified by the apprehensions of her offering violence to herself.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

Tuesday morn. June 20.

WELL, Jack, now are we upon another foot together. This

dear creature will not *let me be good*. She is now authorizing all my plots by her own example.

For here taking advantage of Dorcas's compassionate temper, and of some warm expressions, which the tender-hearted wench let fall against the cruelty of men; and wishing to have it in her power to serve her; has she given her the following note, signed by her maiden name: for she has thought fit, in positive and plain words, to own to the pitying Dorcas, that she is not married.

Monday, June 19. . . .

I the underwritten do hereby promise, that, on my coming into possession of my own estate, I will provide for Dorcas Martindale in a gentlewoman-like manner, in my own house: or, if I do not soon obtain that possession, or should first die, I do hereby bind myself, my executors and administrators to pay to her, or her order, during the term of her natural life, the sum of five pounds on each of the four usual quarterly days in the year, that is to say twenty pounds by the year; on condition that she faithfully assist me in my escape from an illegal confinement, under which I now labour. The first quarterly payment to commence and be payable at the end of three months immediately following the day of my deliverance. And I do also promise to give her, as a testimony of my honour in the rest, a diamond ring which I have shewed her, Witness my hand this nineteenth day of June, in the year above written.

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Now, Jack, what terms wouldst thou have me to keep with such a sweet corruptress? Seest thou not how she hates me? Seest thou not, that she is resolved never to forgive me? Seest thou not, however, that she must disgrace herself in the eye of the world, if she actually should escape? That she must be subjected to infinite distress and hazard! For whom has she to receive and protect her? Yet to determine to risk all these evils! And furthermore to stoop to artifice, to be guilty of the reigning vice of the times, of bribery and corruption! O Jack, Jack! *say* not, *write* not, another word in her favour!

Thou hast blamed me for bringing her to this house: but had I carried her to any other in England, where there would have been one servant or inmate capable either of *compassion* or *corruption*, what must have been the consequence?

But seest thou not, however, that in this flimsy contrivance the dear implacable, like a drowning man, catches at a straw to save herself! A straw shall she find to be the refuge she has resorted to.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

Wednesday.

A MAN is just now arrived from M. Hall, who tells me, that my lord is in a very dangerous way. The gout in his stomach to an extreme degree, occasioned by drinking a great quantity of lemonade.

A man of 10,000*l.* a year to prefer his appetite to his health!

He deserves to die! But we have all of us our inordinate passions to gratify: and they generally bring their punishment along with them. So witnesses the nephew as well as the uncle.

The man says, that his lordship was so bad when he came away, that the family began to talk of sending for me, in post-haste. As I know the old peer has a good deal of cash by him, of which he seldom keeps account, it behoves me to go down as soon as I can. But what shall I do with this dear creature the while? To-morrow over, I shall, perhaps, be able to answer my own question. I am afraid she will make me desperate.

For here have I sent to implore her company, and am denied with scorn.

* * * *

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

Thursday noon, June 22.

LET me perish if I know what to make either of myself or of this surprising creature now calm, now tempestuous but I know thou lovest not anticipation any more than I.

At my repeated request, she met me at six this morning. She was ready dressed; for she has not had her clothes off ever since she declared, that they never more should be off in this house.

She looked not favourably upon me. A cloud hung upon her brow at her entrance: but as she was going to answer me, a still greater solemnity took possession of her charming features.

Your air, and your countenance, my beloved creature, are not propitious to me. Let me beg of you, before you speak, to forbear all further recriminations: for already I have such a sense of my vileness to you, that I know not how to bear the reproaches of my own mind.

I have been endeavouring, said she, *since I am not permitted to avoid you*, to obtain a composure which I never more expected to see you in. How long I may enjoy it, I cannot tell.

After a pause (for I was all attention) thus she proceeded:

It is easy for me, Mr. Lovelace, to see that further violences are intended me, if I comply not with your purposes, whatever

they are. I will suppose them to be what you solemnly profess they are. But I have told you, as solemnly, my mind, that I never *will*, that I never *can* be yours; nor, if so, any man's upon earth. All vengeance, nevertheless, for the wrongs you have done me, I disclaim. I want but to slide into some obscure corner, to hide myself from you, and from every one who once loved me. The desire lately so near my heart, of a reconciliation with my friends, is much abated. They shall not receive me *now* if they would. Sunk in mine own eyes, I now think myself unworthy of their favour. In the anguish of my soul, therefore, I conjure you, Lovelace, [tears in her eyes] to leave me to my fate. In doing so, you will give me a pleasure, the highest I now can know.

Whither, my dearest life —

No matter whither. I will leave to Providence, when I am out of this house, the direction of my future steps. I am sensible enough of my destitute condition. I know, that I have not now a friend in the world. Even Miss Howe has given me up—or you are—but I would fain keep my temper! By your means I have lost them all—and you have been a barbarous enemy to me. You know you have.

She paused.

I could not speak.

The evils I have suffered, proceeded she, [turning from me] however irreparable, are but *temporary* evils. Leave me to my hopes of being enabled to obtain the Divine forgiveness, for the offence I have been drawn in to give to my parents, and to virtue; that so I may avoid the evils that are *more t'ran temporary*. This is now all I have to wish for. And what is it that I demand, that I have not a right to, and from which it is an illegal violence to withhold me?

It was impossible for me, I told her plainly, to comply. I besought her to give me her hand on this very day. I could not live without her. I communicated to her my lord's illness, as a reason why I wished not to stay for her uncle's anniversary. I besought her to bless me with her consent; and after the ceremony was passed to accompany me down to Berks. And thus, my dearest life, said I, will you be freed from a house, to which you have conceived so great an antipathy.

She hesitated, and looked down, as if irresolute. And this set my heart up at my mouth. And, believe me, I had instantly popt in upon me, in imagination, an old spectacled parson, with a white surplus thrown over a black habit, whining and snuffling through his nose the irrevocable ceremony.

I hope now, my dear life, said I, snatching her hand, and pressing it to my lips, that your silence bodes me good. Let me,

my beloved creature, have but your *tacit* consent; and this moment I will step out and engage a minister—and then I promised how much my whole future life should be devoted to her commands, and that I would make her the best and tenderest of husbands.

At last, turning to me, I have told you my mind Mr. Lovelace, said she. Think you, that I could thus solemnly—there she stopt—I am too much in your power, proceeded she; your prisoner, rather than a person free to choose for myself, or to say what I will *do* or *be*—but, as a testimony that you mean me well, let me instantly quit this house; and I will then give you such an answer in writing, as best befits my unhappy circumstances.

Will not the consequence of your departure hence be that I shall lose you for ever, madam?—And can I bear the thoughts of that?

She flung from me—My soul disdains to hold parley with thee, were her violent words—but I threw myself at her feet, and took hold of her reluctant hand, and began to imprecate, to vow, to promise—but thus the passionate beauty, interrupting me, went on:

I am sick of thee, man!—One continued string of vows, oaths, and protestations, varied only by time and place, fills thy mouth!—Why detainest thou me! My heart rises against thee, O thou *cruel implement of my brother's causeless vengeance*—all I beg of thee is, that thou wilt remit me the *future* part of my father's dreadful curse! The *temporary* part, base and ungrateful as thou art! thou hast completed.

I was speechless!—Well I might!—Her *brother's* implement!—*James Harlowe's* implement! Zounds, Jack, what words were these!

I let go her struggling hand. She took two or three turns across the room, her whole haughty soul in her air. Then approaching me, but in silence, turning from me and again to me in a milder voice—I see thy confusion, Lovelace. Or is it thy remorse?—I have but one request to make thee—the request so often repeated—that thou wilt this moment permit me to quit this house. Adieu, then, let me say, for *ever* adieu! And mayst thou enjoy that happiness, in this world, which thou hast robbed me of; as thou hast of every friend I have in it.

And saying this, away she flung, leaving me in a confusion so great, that I knew not what to think, say or do.

But Dorcas soon roused me—Do you know sir, running in hastily, that my lady is gone down stairs!

No, sure! And down I flew, and found her once more at the street door, contending with Polly Horton to get out.

She rushed by me into the fore-parlour, and flew to the

window, and attempted once more to throw up the sash. Good people! cried she.

I caught her in my arms, and lifted her from the window. But being afraid of hurting the charming creature (charming in her very rage) she slid through my arms on the floor. Let me die here! Let me die here! were her words; remaining jointless and immovable, till Sally and Mrs. Sinclair hurried in.

She was visibly affrighted: and up stairs she hastened. A bad woman is certainly, Jack, more terrible to her own sex, than even a bad man.

I followed her up. She rushed by her own apartment into the dining-room: no terror can make her forget her punctilio.

To recite what passed there of invective, exclamations, threatenings, even of her own life, on one side; of expostulations, supplications, and sometimes menaces, on the other; would be too affecting; and, after my particularity in like scenes, these things may as well be imagined as expressed.

I will therefore only mention, that, at length, I extorted a concession from her. She had reason* to think it would have been worse for her on the spot, if she had not made it. It was, *That she would endeavor to make herself easy, till she saw what next Thursday, her uncle's birth-day, would produce.* But O that it were not a sin, she passionately exclaimed on making this poor concession, to put an end to her own life, rather than yield to give me but *that* assurance!

This however shews me, that she is aware that the reluctantly-given assurance may be fairly construed into a matrimonial expectation on my side. And if she will *now*, even *now*, look forward, I think, from my heart, that I will put on her livery, and wear it for life.

Thursday night.

CONFOUNDEDLY out of humour with this perverse woman! —Nor wilt thou blame me, if thou art my friend. She regards the concession she made, as a concession extorted from her. And we are but just where we were before she made it.

With great difficulty I prevailed upon her to favour me with her company for one half hour this evening. The necessity I was under to go down to M. Hall, was the subject I wanted to talk upon.

* The lady mentions, on her memorandum-book, that she had no other way, as she apprehended, to save herself from instant dishonour, but by making this concession. Her only hope, now, she says, if she cannot escape by Dorcas's connivance (whom, nevertheless, she suspects) is, to find a way to engage the protection of her uncle, and even of the civil magistrate, on Thursday next, if necessary. "He shall see, says she, tame and timid as he has thought me, what I dare to do, to avoid so hated a compulsion, and a man capable of a baseness so premeditatedly vile and inhuman."

I told her, that as she had been so good as to promise, that she would endeavour to make herself easy till she saw the Thursday in next week over, I hoped that she would not scruple to oblige me with her word, that I should find her here at my return from M. Hall.

Indeed she would make me no such promise. Nothing of *this house* was mentioned to me, said she: you know it was not. And do you think that I would have given *my consent to my imprisonment in it?*

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

June 23, Friday morning.

I WENT out early this morning, on a design that I know not yet whether I shall or shall not pursue; and on my return found Simon Parsons, my lord's Berkshire Bailiff, (just before arrived) waiting for me with a message in form, sent by all the family, to press me to go down, and that at my lord's particular desire; who wants to see me before he dies.

Simon has brought my lord's chariot and six to carry me down. I have ordered it to be in readiness by four to-morrow morning. The cattle shall smoke for the delay; and by the rest they'll have in the interim, will be better able to bear it.

I am still resolved upon matrimony, if my fair perverse will accept of me. But, if she will not—why then I must give an interrupted hearing, not to my conscience, but to these women below.

Dorcas had acquainted her lady with Simon's arrival and errand. My beloved had desired to see him. But my coming in prevented his attendance on her, just as Dorcas was instructing him what questions he should *not* answer to, that might be asked of him.

I am to be admitted to her presence immediately, at my repeated request. Surely the acquisition in view will help me to make up all with her. She is just gone up to the dining-room.

* * * *

Nothing will do, Jack!—I can procure no favour from her, though she has obtained from me the point which she had set her heart upon.

I will give thee a brief account of what passed between us.

I first proposed instant marriage; and this in the most fervent manner: but this was denied as fervently.

Would she be pleased to assure me, that she would stay here only till Tuesday morning? I would but just go down and see how my lord was to know whether he had any thing particular to say, or enjoin me. while yet he was sensible as he was very earn-

est to see me—perhaps I might be up on Sunday—Concede in something!—I beseech you, madam, show me some little consideration.

Why, Mr. Lovelace, must I be determined by your motions?—Think you, that I will voluntarily give a sanction to the imprisonment of my person? Of what importance to me ought to be your stay or your return?

Give a sanction to the imprisonment of your person? Do you think, madam, that I fear the law?

I might have spared this foolish question of defiance: but my pride would not let me. I thought she threatened me, Jack.

I *don't* think you fear the law, sir—You are too *brave* to have any regard either to moral or divine sanctions.

'Tis well, madam—But ask me any thing I can do to oblige *you*: and I *will* oblige you; though in nothing will you oblige *me*.

Then I ask you, then I request of you, to let me go to Hampstead.

I paused—and at last—By my soul you shall—this very moment I will wait upon you, and see you fixed there, if you'll promise me your hand on Thursday in presence of your uncle.

I want not *you* to see me fixed. I will promise nothing.

Take care, madam, that you don't let me see that I can have no reliance upon your future favor.

I have been used to be threatened by you, sir—But I will accept of your company to Hampstead—I will be ready to go in a quarter of an hour—my clothes may be sent after me.

You know the condition, madam—next Thursday.

You dare not trust—

My infinite demerits tell me, that I *ought* not—nevertheless, I *will* confide in your generosity—To-morrow morning, (no *new cause* arising to give reason to the contrary) as early as you please, you may go to Hampstead.

This seemed to oblige her. But yet she looked with a face of doubt.

I will go down to the women, Belford. And having no better judges at hand, will hear what they say upon my critical situation with this proud beauty, who has so insolently rejected a Lovelace kneeling at her feet, though making an earnest tender of himself for a husband, in spite of all his prejudices to the state of shackles.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford Esq.

Friday night, or rather Sat. morn. 1 o'clock.

I THOUGHT I should not have had either time or inclination to

write another line before I got to M. Hall. But have the first, must find the last ; since I can neither sleep, nor do anything but write, if I can do that. I am most *confoundedly* out of humour. The reason let it follow ; if it will follow—no preparation for it from me.

I tried by gentleness and love to soften—what?—marble. A heart incapable either of love or gentleness. Her past injuries forever in her head. Ready to receive a favour ; the permission to go to Hampstead, but neither to deserve it, nor return any. So my scheme of the gentle kind was soon given over.

She was very uneasy, upon the whole, in my company : wanted often to break from me : yet so held me to my promise of permitting her to go to Hampstead, that I knew not how to get off it ; although it was impossible in my precarious situation with her, to think of performing it.

In this situation ; the women ready to assist ; and, if I proceeded not, as ready to ridicule me ; what had I left me, but to pursue the concerted scheme, and to seek a pretence to quarrel with her, in order to revoke my promised permission, and to convince her that I would not be upbraided as the most brutal of ravishers for nothing ?

I had agreed with the women, that if I could not find a pretence in her presence to begin my operations, the note* should lie in my way, and I was to pick it up, soon after her retiring from me. But I began to doubt at near ten o'clock (so earnest was she to leave me, suspecting my over-warm behaviour to her, and eager grasping of her hand two or three times, with eye-strings, as I felt, on the strain, while her eyes shewed uneasiness and apprehension) that if she actually retired for the night it might be a chance whether it would be easy to come at her again. Loth, therefore, to run such a risk, I stepped out a little after ten, with intent to alter the preconcerted disposition a little ; saying I would attend her again instantly. But as I returned I met her at the door, intending to withdraw for the night. I could not persuade her to go back : nor had I presence of mind (so full of complaisance as I was to her just before) to stay her by force : so she slid through my hands into her own apartment. I had nothing to do, therefore but to let my former concert take place.

She had hardly got into her chamber but I found a little paper, as I was going into mine, which I took up ; and opening it (for it was carefully pinned in another paper) what should it be but a promissory note, given as a bribe, with a further promise of a diamond ring, to induce Dorcas to favour her mistress's escape !

How my temper changed in a moment !—Ring, ring, ring ring

* The note referred to is the bond given to Dorcas.—Ed.

I my bell, with violence enough to break the string, and as if the house were on fire.

Every devil frightened into active life: the whole house in an uproar: up runs Will.—Sir—Sir—Sir! Eyes goggling, mouth distended. Bid the d—n'd toad Dorcas come hither. (as I stood at the stair head) in a horrible rage, and out of breath, cried I.

In sight came the trembling devil—but standing aloof from the report made her by Will of the passion I was in, as well as from what she had heard.

Flash came out my sword immediately; for I had it ready on—Cursed, confounded, villainous, bribery and corruption—

Up runs she to her lady's door, screaming out for safety and protection.

Good your honour, interposed Will, for God's sake!—O lord, O lord!—receiving a good cuff.—

Take that, varlet, for saving the ungrateful *wretch* from my vengeance.—

Up ran two or three of the sisterhood. What's the matter! What's the matter!

The matter! (for still my beloved opened not the door; on the contrary, drew another bolt) This *abominable* Dorcas!—(Call her aunt up!—Let her see what a traitress she has placed about me.—And let her bring the toad to answer for herself!—has taken a bribe, a provision for life, to betray her trust; by that means to perpetuate a quarrel between a man and his wife, and frustrate for ever all hopes of reconciliation between us!

Let me perish, Belford, if I have patience to proceed with the farce!

If you must have it all, you must!

Now, Belford, see us all sitting in judgment, resolved to punish the fair briberess—I, and the mother, the hitherto *dreaded* mother, the nieces Sally, Polly, the traitoress Dorcas, and Mabel, a guard, as it were, over Dorcas that she might not run away, and hide herself: all pre-determined, and of *necessity* pre-determined, from the journey I was going to take, and my precarious situation with her—and hear her *unbolt, unlock, unbar* the door; then as it proved afterwards, put the key into the lock on the outside, lock the door and put it in her pocket—Will, I knew, below, who would give me notice, if, while we were all above, she should mistake her way, and go down stairs, instead of coming into the dining-room: the street doors also doubly secured, and every shutter to the windows round the house fastened, that no noise or screaming should be heard [such was the brutal preparation!]
—And then *hear* her step towards us, and instantly *see* her enter among us, confiding in her own innocence; and with a majesty in her person and manner, that is *natural* to her—but

which then shone out in all its glory ;—Every tongue silent, every eye awed, every heart quaking, mine in a particular manner, sunk throbless, and twice below its usual region, to once at my throat : —a shameless recreant !—She silent too, looking round her, first on me, then on the mother, as no longer fearing her ! then on Sally, Polly, and the culprit Dorcas !—Such the glorious power of innocence exerted at that awful moment.

She would have spoken, but could not, looking down my guilt into confusion. A mouse might have been heard passing over the floor ; her own light feet and rustling silks could not have prevented it ; for she seemed to tread air, and to be all soul. She passed backwards and forwards now towards me, now towards the door several times, before speech could get the better of indignation ; and at last, after twice or thrice hemming to recover her articulate voice—“ O thou contemptible and abandoned Lovelace ! thinkest thou that I see not through this poor villainous plot of thine, and of these thy wicked accomplices ?

“ Thou, woman, [looking at the mother] once my terror ! always my dislike ; but now my detestation ! shouldst once more (for thine perhaps was the preparation) have provided for me intoxicating potions to rob me of my senses—

“ And then, thou wretch, [*turning to me*] mightest more securely have depended upon such a low contrivance as this !

“ And ye, vile women, who perhaps have been the ruin, body and soul, of hundreds of innocents, (you shew me *how* in full assembly) know, that I am not married—ruined as I am, by your help, I bless God, I am *not* married to this miscreant—and I have friends that will demand my honour at your hands !—And to whose authority I will apply : for none has this man over me. Look to it then, what further insults you offer me, or incite him to offer me. I am a person though thus vilely betrayed, of rank and fortune. I never will be his ; and to your utter ruin, will find friends to pursue you : and now I have this full proof of your detestable wickedness, and have heard your base incitements, will have no mercy upon you ! ”

They could not laugh at the poor figure I made. Lord ! how every devil, conscience-shaken, trembled !

What a dejection must ever fall to the lot of guilt, were it given to innocence always thus to exert itself !

“ And as for thee, thou vile Dorcas ; thou *double* deceiver—whining out thy pretended love for me ! Begone, wretch !—Nobody will hurt thee ! Begone, I say ! Thou hast too well acted thy part to be blamed by *any* here but myself, thou art safe : thy guilt is thy security in such a house as this ! Thy shameful, thy poor part, thou hast as well acted, as the low farce could give thee to act ! as well as they each of them (thy supe-

riors, though not thy betters) thou seest can act theirs. Steal away into darkness: no inquiry after this will be made, whose the first advances, thine or mine."

And, as I hope to live, the wench, confoundedly frightened, slunk away; so did her sentinel Mabell; though I, endeavouring to rally cried out for Dorcas to stay—but I believe the devil could not have stopt her, when an angel bid her begone.

Madam, said I, let me tell you; and was advancing towards her with a fierce aspect, most cursedly vexed, and ashamed too—

But she turned to me; "Stop where thou art, O vilest and most abandoned of men! Stop where thou art! Nor with that determined face, offer to touch me, if thou wouldst not that I should be a corpse at thy feet!"

To my astonishment, she held forth a penknife in her hand, the point to her own bosom, grasping resolutely the whole handle, so that there was no offering to take it from her.

"I offer not mischief to anybody but myself. You, sir, and ye women, are safe from every violence of mine. The LAW shall be all my resource: the LAW," and she spoke the word with emphasis, that to such people carries natural terror with it, and now struck a panic into them.

No wonder, since those who will damn themselves to procure ease and plenty in this world, will tremble at every thing that seems to threaten their methods of obtaining that ease and plenty.

The LAW only shall be my refuge!—

The infamous mother whispered me, that it were better to *make terms* with this *strange* lady, and let her go.

Madam, madam, madam—these are insults not to be borne—and was approaching her,

She withdrew to the door, and set her back against it, holding the pointed knife to her heaving bosom; while the women held me, beseeching me not to provoke the violent lady—for their *house* sake, and he curs'd to them, they besought me—and all three hung upon me—while the truly heroic lady, braved me, at that distance.

"Approach me, Lovelace, with resentment, if thou wilt. I dare die. It is in defence of my honour. God will be merciful to my poor soul! I expect no mercy from thee! I have gained this distance, and two steps nearer me, and thou shalt see what I dare do!"—

Leave me, women, to myself, and to my angel;—They retired at a distance—O my beloved creature, how you terrify me!—Holding out my arms. and kneeling on one knee—Not a step, not a step further, except to receive my death at that injured hand which is thus held up against a life far dearer to me than my own ' I am

a villain ! the blackest of villains—Say you will sheath your knife in the injurer's, not the injured's heart, and then I will indeed approach you but not else.

The mother twang'd her d—n'd nose ; and Sally and Polly pulled out their handkerchiefs, and turned from us. They never in their lives, they told me afterwards, beheld such a scene—— Innocence so triumphant : villainy so debased, they must mean !

Unawares to myself, I had moved onward to my anger ; — “ And dost thou, dost thou, *still* disclaiming *still* advancing—dost thou, dost thou, *still* insidiously move towards me ? ” [and her hand was extended] “ I dare I dare not rashly neither, my heart from *principle* abhors the act, which *thou* makest *necessary* ! God in thy mercy ; [lifting up her eyes and hands] God in thy mercy ! ”

I threw myself to the further end of the room. An ejaculation, a silent ejaculation employing her thoughts that moment ! Polly says the whites of her lovely eyes were only visible : and, in the instant that she extended her hand, *assuredly* to strike the fatal blow [how the very recital terrifies me !] she cast her eye towards me, and saw me, at the utmost distance the room would allow, and heard my broken voice—my voice was utterly broken ; nor knew I what I said, or whether to the purpose or not—and her charming cheeks, that were all in a glow before, turned pale, as if terrified at her own purpose ; and, lifting up her eyes—“ Thank God !—Thank God ! said the angel—delivered *for the present* ; for the *present* delivered—from myself—keep, sir, keep that distance,” [looking down towards me, who was prostrate on the floor, my heart pierced, as with a hundred daggers :] “ that distance has saved a life : to what reserved, the Almighty only knows ! ”—

To *be* happy, madam, and to *make* happy !—And O let me but hope for your favour for to-morrow—I will put off my journey till then—and may God—

Swear not, sir !—with an awful and piercing aspect—you have too, too often sworn !—God's eye is upon us !—His more *immediate* eye : and looked wildly.—But the women looked up to the ceiling, as if *afraid* of God's eye, and trembled. And well they might ; and I too, who so very lately had each of us the devil in our hearts.

If not to-morrow, madam, say but next Thursday, say but next Thursday !

“ This I say, of this you may assure yourself, I never, never *will* be yours.—And let me hope, that I may be entitled to the performance of your promise, to be permitted to leave this *innocent* house, as one called it (but long have my ears been accustomed to such inversions of words) as soon as the day breaks.”

Did my perdition depend upon it, that you cannot, madam, but

upon terms. And I hope you will not terrify me—still dreading the accursed knife,—

“Nothing less than an attempt upon my honour shall make me desperate. I have no view but to defend my honour: with such a view only I entered into treaty with your infamous agent below. The resolution you have seen, I trust, God will give me again, upon the same occasion. But for a *less*, I wish not for it. —Only take notice, women, that I am no wife of *this man*: basely as he has used me, I am not his wife. He has no authority over me. If he go away by and by, and you act by his authority to detain me, look to it.

Then, taking one of the lights, she turned from us; and away she went unmolested.—Not a soul was *able* to molest her.

Mabel saw her, tremblingly, and in a hurry, take the key of her chamber-door out of her pocket, and unlock it; and, as soon as she entered, heard her double-lock, bar, and bolt it.

But her taking out her key, when she came out of her chamber to us, she no doubt suspected my design: which was, to have carried her in my arms thither, if she made such force necessary, after I had intimidated her; and to have been her companion for that night.

* * * *

This, this, Belford, was the hand I made of a contrivance from which I expected so much!—And now I am ten times worse off than before.

Thou never sawest people in thy life look so like fools upon one another, as the mother, her partners, and I did, for a few minutes. And at last, the two devilish nymphs broke out into insulting ridicule upon me; while the old wretch was concerned for her house, the reputation of her house. I cursed them altogether; and, retiring to my chamber, locked myself in.

And now it is time to set out: all I have gained, detection, disgrace, fresh guilt by repeated perjuries, and to be despised by her I *doat upon*; and what is still worse to a proud heart, by *myself*.

Near 5, Sat. morn.

Mr. Lovelace to Miss Clarissa Harlowe.

Superscribed to Mrs. Lovelace.

M. Hall, Sat. night, June 24.

MY DEAREST LIFE,

IF you do not impute to love, and to terror raised by love, the poor figure I made before you last night, you will not do me justice. I thought I would try to the very last moment, it, by complying with you in *every thing*, I could prevail upon you to promise

to be mine on Thursday next, since you refused me an earlier day. Could I have been so happy, you had not been hindered going to Hampstead, or wherever else you pleased. But when I could not prevail upon you to give me this assurance, what room had I (my demerit so great) to suppose, that your going thither would not be to lose you forever?

I will not offer to defend myself for *wishing you to remain where you are*, till either you give me your word to meet me at the altar on Thursday; or till I have the honour of attending you, preparative to the solemnity which will make that day the happiest day of my life.

I am but too sensible, that this kind of treatment may appear to you with the face of an arbitrary and illegal imposition: but as the consequences, not only to *ourselves*, but to *both our families*, may be fatal, if you cannot be moved in my favour: let me beseech you to forgive this act of compulsion, on the score of the necessity you your dear self have laid me under to be guilty of it; and to permit the solemnity of next Thursday to include an act of oblivion of all past offences.

I send this by a special messenger, who will wait your pleasure in relation to the impatiently wished for Thursday, which I humbly hope will be signified by a line.

My lord, though hardly sensible, and unmindful of every thing but of our felicity, desires his most affectionate compliments to you. He has in readiness to present to you a very valuable set of jewels, which he hopes will be acceptable, whether he lives to see you adorn them or not.

Lady Sarah and Lady Betty have also their tokens of respect ready to court your acceptance: but may heaven incline you to give the opportunity of receiving their personal compliments, and those of my cousins Montague before the next week be out!

His lordship is exceeding ill. Dr. S. has no hopes of him. The only consolation I can have for the death of a relation who loves me so well, if he *do* die, must arise from the additional power it will put into my hands of shewing how much I am,

My dearest life,

Your ever affectionate and faithful,

LOVELACE.

Mr. Lovelace to Miss Clarissa Harlowe.

Superscribed to Mrs. Lovelace.

M. Hall, Sunday night, June 25.

MY DEAREST LOVE,

I CANNOT find words to express how much I am mortified at the return of my messenger without a line from you.

Thursday is so near, that I will send messenger after messenger every four hours, till I have a favourable answer ; the one to meet the other, till its eve arrives, to know if I may venture to appear in your presence with the hope of having my wishes answered on that day.

Your love, madam, I neither expect, nor ask for ; nor will, till my future behaviour gives you cause to think I deserve it. All I at present presume to wish is, to have it in my power to do to you all the justice I can now do you : and to your generosity will I leave it, to reward me as I shall merit, with your affection.

At present revolving my poor behaviour of Friday night before you, I think I should sooner choose to go to my last audit, unprepared for it as I am, than to appear in your presence, unless you give me some hope, that I shall be received as your elected husband, rather than, (however deserved) as a detested criminal.

Let me therefore propose an expedient, in order to spare my own confusion ; and to spare you the necessity for that soul-harrowing recrimination, which I cannot stand, and which must be disagreeable to yourself—to name the church, and I will have every thing in readiness ; so that our next interview will be, in a manner, at the very altar ; and then you will have the kind husband to forgive for the faults of the ungrateful lover. If your resentment be still too high to write more, let it only be in your own dear hand, these words, *St. Martin's Church, Thursday*—or these, *St. Giles's Church, Thursday* ; nor will I insist upon any inscription or subscription, or so much as the initials of your name. This shall be all the favour I will expect, till the dear hand itself is given to mine, in presence of that Being whom I invoke as a witness of the inviolable faith and honour of

Your adoring
LOVELACE.

Mr. Lovelace to Miss Clarissa Harlowe.

Superscribed to Mrs. Lovelace.

M. Ha'l, Monday, June 26.

ONCE more, my dearest love, do I conjure you to send me the four requested words. There is no time to be lost. And I would not have next Thursday go over, without being entitled to call you mine, for the world : and that as well for your sake as my own. Hitherto all that has past is between you and me only ; but, after Thursday, if my wishes are unanswered, the whole will be before the world.

My lord is extremely ill, and endures not to have me out of his

sight for one half hour. But this shall not have the least weight with me, if you be pleased to hold out the olive-branch to me in the four requested words.

My Lord M. but just now has told me, how happy he should think himself to have an opportunity, before he dies, to salute you as his niece. I have put him in hopes that he shall see you ; and have told him that I will go to town on Wednesday, in order to prevail upon you to accompany me down on Thursday or Friday. I have ordered a set to be in readiness to carry me up ; and, were not my lord so very ill, my cousin Montague tells me, she would offer her attendance on you. If you please, therefore, we can set out for this place the moment the solemnity is performed.

Do not, dearest creature, dissipate all these promising appearances, and by refusing to save your own and your family's reputation in the eye of the world, use yourself worse than the ungratefulest wretch on earth has used you. For if we are married, all the disgrace you imagine you have suffered while a single lady will be my own ; and only known to ourselves.

Once more, then, consider well the situation we are both in ; and remember, my dearest life, that Thursday will be soon here and that you have no time to lose.

Surely, my dear, you never could, at any time, suffer half so much from cruel suspense, as I do.

If I have not an answer to this, either from your own goodness, or through Mr. Belford's intercession, it will be too late for me to set out.

Relieve, I beseech you, dearest madam, by the four requested words, or by Mr. Belford, the anxiety of

Your ever affectionate
and obliged

LOVELACE.

Remember, there will not, there cannot be time for further writing and for coming up by Thursday.

Mr. Belford to Robert Lovelace, Esq.

Thursday, June 29.

THOU hast heard from Mowbray the news. Bad or good, I know not which thou'lt deem it. I only wish I could have given thee joy upon the same account, before the unhappy lady was seduced from Hampstead ; for then of what an ungrateful villany hadst thou been spared the perpetration, which now thou hast to answer for !

I came to town purely to serve thee with her, expecting that thy next would satisfy me that I might endeavour it without dis-

honour. And at first when I found her gone, I half pitied thee; for now wilt thou be inevitably blown up: and in what an execrable light wilt thou appear to all the world—Poor Lovelace! Caught in thy own snares! Thy punishment is but beginning!

But to my narrative: for I suppose thou expectest all particulars from me, since Mowbray has informed thee that I have been collecting them.

“The noble exertion of spirit she had made on Friday night, had, it seems, greatly disordered her; insomuch that she was not visible till Saturday evening; when Mabel saw her; and she seemed to be very ill; but on Sunday morning, having dressed herself, as if designing to go to church, she ordered Mabel to get her a coach to the door.

“The wench told her, she was to obey her in every thing but the calling of a coach, or chair, or in relation to letters.

“She sent for Will, and gave him the same command.

“He pleaded his master’s orders to the contrary, and desired to be excused.

“Upon this, down she went, herself, and would have gone out without observation: but finding the street-door double locked, and the key not in the lock, she stepped in to the street parlour, and would have thrown up the sash to call out to the people passing by, as they doubted not: but that since her last attempt of the same nature, had been fastened down.

“Hereupon she resolutely stepped into Mrs. Sinclair’s parlour in the back-house; where were the old devil and her two partners: and demanded the key of the street door, or to have it opened for her.

“They were all surprised! but desired to be excused, and pleaded your orders.

“She asserted that you had no authority over her; and never should have any: that their present refusal was their own act and deed: she saw the intent of their back-house, and the reason of putting her there: she pleaded her condition and fortune; and said, they had no way to avoid utter ruin, but by opening their doors to her, or by murdering her, and burying her in their garden or cellar too deep for detection: that already what had been done to her was punishable by death: and bid them at their peril detain her.

What a noble, what a right spirit has this charming creature, in cases that will justify an exertion of spirit!—

“They answered, that Mr. Lovelace could prove his marriage; and would indemnify them, And they all would have vindicated their behaviour on Friday night, and the reputation of their house, but refusing to hear them on that topic, she flung from them threatening

"About eight yesterday morning, an hour after Polly had left her, she told Mabell, she was sure she should not live long; and having a good many suits of apparel, which after her death would be of no use to anybody she valued, she would give her a brown lustring gown, which, with some alterations to make it more suitable to her degree, would a great while serve her for a Sunday wear; for that she (Mabell) was the only person in that house of whom she could think without terror or antipathy.

"Mabell expressing her gratitude upon the occasion, the lady said, she had nothing to employ herself about, and if she could get a workwoman directly, she would look over her things then, and give her what she intended for her.

"Her mistress's manteau-maker, the maid replied, lived but a little way off; and she doubted not that she could procure *her*, or one of her journey-women, to alter the gown out of hand.

"I will give you also, said she, a quilted coat, which will require but little alteration, if any; for you are much about my stature: but the gown I will give directions about, because the sleeves and the robings and facings must be altered for your wear, being, I believe, above your station; and try if you can get the workwoman, d we'll advise about it. If she cannot come now, let her come in the afternoon; but I had rather now, because it will amuse me.

"Then stepping to the window, it rains, said she, [and so it had done all the morning]: slip on the hat and short cloak I have seen you wear, and come to me when you are ready to go out, because you shall bring me in something that I want.

"Mabell equipped herself accordingly, and received her commands to buy her some trifles, and then left her; but, in her way out, stept into the back parlour, where Dorcas was with Mrs. Sinclair, telling her where she was going, and on what account, bidding Dorcas look out till she came back. So faithful was the wench to the trust reposed in her, and so little had the lady's generosity wrought upon her.

"Mrs. Sinclair commended her; Dorcas envied her, and took her cue: and Mabell soon returned with the manteau-maker's journey-woman, and then Dorcas went off guard.

"The lady looked out the gown and petticoat, and before the workwoman, caused Mabell to try it on; and, that it might fit the better, made the willing wench pull off her upper-petticoat, and put on that she gave her. Then she bid them go into Mr. Lovelaces's apartment, and contrive about it before the pier-glass there, and stay till she came to them, to give them her opinion.

"Mabell would have taken her own clothes, and hat, and short cloak with her: but her lady said, no matter; you may put them on again here, when we have considered about the alterations: there's no occasion to litter the other room.

"They went and instantly, as it is supposed, she slipt on Mabell's gown and petticoat over her own, which was white lustring, and put on the wench's hat, short cloak, and ordinary apron, and down she went.

These are the particulars of Miss Harlowe's flight. Thou'lt hardly think me too minute.—How I long to triumph over thy impatience and fury on the occasion.

Let me beseech thee, my dear Lovelace, in thy next letter, to rave most gloriously!—I shall be grievously disappointed, if thou dost not.

Where, Lovelace, can the poor lady be gone? And who can describe the distress she must be in?

By my former letters, it may be supposed, that she can have very little money: nor, by the suddenness of her flight, more clothes than those she had on. And thou knowest who once said, her parents will not receive her: her uncles will not entertain her: her Norton is in their direction, and cannot: Miss Howe dare not. She has not one friend or intimate in town; entirely a stranger to it. And, let me add, has been despoiled of her honour by the man for whom she made all these sacrifices: and who stood bound to her by a thousand oaths and vows, to be her husband, her protector, and friend!

How strong must be her resentment of the barbarous treatment she has received! How worthy of herself, that it has made her *hate* the man she once *loved*! And rather than marry him, choose to expose her disgrace to the whole world: to forego the reconciliation with her friends which her heart was so set upon and to hazard a thousand evils to which her youth and her sex may too probably expose an indigent and friendless beauty!

I must add, as well for thy *own* sake, as for the *lady's*, I wish ye were yet to be married to each other. It is the only medium that can be hit upon to salve the honour of both. All that's past may yet be concealed from the world, and from her relations; and thou mayest make amends for all her sufferings, if thou resolvest to be a tender and kind husband to her.

And if this really be thy intention, I will accept with pleasure of a commission from thee, that shall tend to promote so good an end, whenever she can be found; that is to say, if she will admit to her presence a man who professes friendship to thee. Nor can I give a greater demonstration that I am

Thy sincere friend,

J. BELFORD.

P. S. Mabell's clothes were thrown into the passage this morning; nobody knows by whom.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

Friday, June 30.

I AM ruined, undone, blown up, destroyed, and worse than annihilated, that's certain!—But was not the news shocking enough dost thou think, without thy throwing into the too weighty scale reproaches, which thou couldst have had no opportunity to make but for my own voluntary communications? At a time too, when, as it falls out, I have another very sensible disappointment to struggle with?

One thing I will nevertheless add, to shew the sincerity of my contrition—'Tis this, that if thou canst by any means find her out within these three days, or any time before she has discovered the stories, to be what they are; and if thou canst prevail upon her to consent, I will actually, in thy presence and his (he to represent her uncle) marry her.

I am still in hopes it may be so—she cannot be long concealed—I have already set all engines at work to find her out! and if I do, what *indifferent* persons [and no one of her *friends*, as thou observest, will look upon her] will care to embroil themselves with a man of my figure, fortune, and resolution? Shew her this part, then, or any other part of this letter, at thy own discretion, if thou *canst* find her: for, after all, methinks, I would be glad that this affair, which is bad enough in itself, should go off without worse personal consequences to any body else; and yet it runs in my mind, I know not why, that sooner or later it will draw a few drops of blood after it: except she and I can make it up between ourselves. And this may be another reason why she should not carry her resentment too far—not that such an affair would give me much concern neither, were I to choose my man or men, for I heartily hate all her family, but herself, and ever shall.

Thy mortified

LOVELACE.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.

Wednesday night, June 28.

O MY DEAREST MISS HOWE!

ONCE more have I escaped!—but, alas! I, my *best self*, have *not* escaped!—Oh! your poor Clarissa Harlowe! *You* also will hate me, I fear!—

Yet you won't, when you know all!

But no more of myself! My *lost self*. You that can rise in a morning to be blessed, and to bless; and go to rest delighted with

your own reflections, and in your unbroken, unstarting slumbers, conversing with saints and angels, the former only more pure than yourself, as they have shaken off the encumbrance of body; you shall be my subject as you have long, long been my only pleasure. And let me, at awful distance, revere my beloved Anna Howe, and in her reflect upon what her Clarissa Harlowe once was!

* * * *

Forgive, O forgive my rambling. My peace is destroyed. My intellects are touched. And what flighty nonsense must you read, if you now will vouchsafe to correspond with me, as formerly!

O my best, my dearest, my *only* friend! What a tale have I to unfold!—But still upon *self*, this vile, this hated *self*!—I will shake it off, if possible! and why should I not, since I think, except one wretch, I hate nothing so much? Self, then, be banished from *self* one moment, (for I doubt it *will* for no longer) to inquire after a *dearer* object, my beloved Anna Howe!—Whose mind, all robed in spotless white, charms and irradiates—but what would I say?—

* * * *

And how, my dearest friend, after this rhapsody, which on reperusal I would not let go, but to shew you what a distracted mind dictates to my trembling pen? *How do you?* You have been very ill, it seems. That you are *recovered*, my dear, let me hear. That your mother is well, pray let me hear, and hear quickly. This comfort surely is owing to me; for if life is no *worse* than chequer-work, I must now have a little white to come, having seen nothing but black, all unchequered dismal black, for a great, great while.

* * * *

And what is all this wild incoherence for? It is only to beg to know how you have been, and how you now do, by a line directed for Mrs. Rachel Clark, at Mr. Smith's, a glove-shop, in King Street, Covent Garden; which (although my abode is a secret to every body else) will reach the hands of—*Your unhappy*—but that's not enough—

Your miserable
CLARISSA HARLOWE

Mrs. Howe to Miss Clarissa Harlowe.

Superscribed, as directed in the preceding.

Friday, June 30.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE,

YOU will wonder to receive a letter from me. I am sorry for

the great distress you seem to be in, such a hopeful young lady as you were ! But see what comes of disobedience to parents !

For my part : although I pity you, yet I much more pity your poor father and mother. Such education as they gave you ! such improvement as you made ! and such delight as they took in you ! —And all come to this !—

But, pray miss, don't make my Nancy guilty of your fault : which is that of disobedience. I have charged her over and over not to correspond with one who has made such a giddy step. It is not to her reputation, I am sure. You *knew* that I so charged her ; yet you go on corresponding together to my very great vexation ; for she has been very perverse upon it more than once. *Evil communication*, miss, you know the rest.

If people, who seek their own ruin, could be the only sufferers by their headstrong doings, it were something : but, O miss, miss ! what have *you* to answer for, who have made as many grieved hearts as have known you ! The whole sex is indeed wounded by you : for, who but Miss Clarissa Harlowe was proposed by every father and mother for a pattern for their daughters ?

I write a long letter, where I proposed to say but a few words ; and those to forbid your writing to my Nancy ; and this as well because of the false step you have made, as because it will grieve her poor heart, and do you no good. If you love her, therefore, write not to her. Your sad letter came into my hands, Nancy being abroad : and I shall not shew it her ; for there will be no comfort for her, if she saw it, nor for me, whose delight she is—*as you once was to your parents.*—

But you seem to be sensible enough of your errors now.—So are all giddy girls, when it is too late : and what a crest-fallen figure then do the consequences of their self-willed obstinacy and headstrongness compel them to make !

I may say too much : only as I think it proper to bear that testimony against your rashness which it behoves every careful parent to bear : and none more than

Your compassionating well-wisher,

ANNABELLA HOWE.

I send this by a special messenger, who has business only as far as Barnet, because you shall have no need to write again : knowing how you love writing : and knowing likewise, *that misfortune makes people plaintive.*

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Hrs. Howe.

Saturday, July 2.

PERMIT me, madam, to trouble you with a few lines, were it

only to thank you for your reproofs ; which have nevertheless drawn fresh streams of blood from a bleeding heart.

My story is a dismal story. It has circumstances in it that would engage pity, and possibly a judgment not altogether unfavourable, were these circumstances known. But it is my business, and shall be all my business, to resent of my failings, and not endeavour to extenuate them.

Nor will I seek to distress your worthy mind. *If I cannot suffer alone*, I will make as few parties as I can in my sufferings. And, indeed, I took up my pen with this resolution when I wrote the letter which has fallen into your hands. It was only to know, and that for a very particular reason, as well as for affection unbounded, if my dear Miss Howe, from whom I had not heard for a long time, were ill ; as I had been told she was ; and if so, how she now does. But my injuries being recent, and my distresses having been exceeding great, *self* would crowd into my letter. When distressed, the human mind is apt to turn itself to every one in whom it imagined or wished an interest, for pity and consolation.—Or, to express myself better, and more concisely in your own words, *misfortune makes people plaintive* : and to whom, if not to a friend, can the afflicted complain ?

Miss Howe being abroad when my letter came, I flatter myself that she is recovered. But it would be some satisfaction to me to be informed if she *has been ill*. Another line from your hand would be too great a favour : but, if you will be pleased to direct any servant to answer *yes*, or *no*, to that question, I will not be further troublesome.

Nevertheless, I must declare, that my Miss Howe's friendship was all the comfort I had, or expected to have in this world ; and a line from her would have been a cordial to my fainting heart. Judge then, dearest madam, how reluctantly I must obey your prohibition—but yet I will endeavour to obey it ; although I should have hoped, as well from the tenor of all that has passed between Miss Howe and me, as from *her* established virtue, that she could not be tainted by *evil communication*, had one or two letters been permitted. This, however, I ask not for, since I think I have nothing to do, but to beg of God (who, I hope, has not yet withdrawn his grace from me, although he is pleased to let loose his justice upon my faults) to give me a truly broken spirit, if it be not already broken enough, and then to take to his mercy,

The unhappy

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Miss Cl. Harlowe to Mrs. Judith Norton.

Thursday, June 29.

MY DEAR MRS. NORTON,

I ADDRESS myself to you after a very long silence, (which however, was not owing either to want of love or duty) principally to desire you to satisfy me in two or three points, which it behoves me to know.

Strange things have happened to me, my dear, worthy, and maternal friend—very strange things!—Mr. Lovelace has proved a very barbarous and ungrateful man to me. But, God be praised, I have escaped from him.

Say nothing to any of my friends that you have heard from me.

Pray—do you think my father would be prevailed upon, if I were to supplicate him by letter, to take off the heavy curse he laid upon me at my going from Harlowe Place? I can expect no other favour from him: but that being literally fulfilled as to my prospects in this life, I hope it will be thought to have operated far enough; and my heart is *so* weak!—it is *very* weak!—But for my father's *own* sake—what *should* I say!—Indeed I hardly know how I *ought* to express myself on this sad subject!—But it will give ease to my mind to be released from it.

I am afraid *my poor*, as I used to call the good creatures to whose necessities I was wont to administer by your faithful hands, have missed me of late. But now, alas! I am poor myself. It is not the least aggravation of my fault, nor of my regrets, that with such inclinations as God had given me, I have put it out of my power to do the good I once pleased myself to think I was born to do: It is a sad thing, my dearest Mrs. Norton, to render useless to ourselves and the world, by our own rashness, the talents which Providence has entrusted to us for the service of both,

But these reflections are now too late; and perhaps I ought to have kept them to myself. Let me however hope that you love me still. Pray let me hope that you do. And then, notwithstanding my misfortunes, which have made me seem ungrateful to the kind and truly maternal pains you have taken with me from my cradle, I shall have the happiness to think that there is *one* worthy person, who hates not

The unfortunate
CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Be pleased to direct for Rachel Clark, at Mr. Smith's, in King Street, Covent Garden. But keep the direction an absolute secret.

Mrs. Norton. In answer.

Saturday, July 1.

YOUR letter, my dearest young lady, cuts me to the heart! Why will you not let me know all your distresses?—Yet you have said enough!

My son is very good to me. A few hours ago he was taken with a feverish disorder. But I hope it will go off happily, if his ardour for business will give him the recess from it which his good master is willing to allow him. He presents his duty to you, and shed tears at hearing your sad letter read.

I am afraid no letter will be received from you. It grieves me to tell you so, my dearest young lady. No evil can have happened to you which they do not *expect* to hear of: so great is their antipathy to the wicked man, and so bad is his character.

I cannot but think hardly of their unforgiveness; but there is no judging for others by one's self. Nevertheless I will add, that, if you had had as gentle spirits to deal with as your own, or I will be bold to say, as mine, these evils had never happened either to them or to you. I knew your virtue, and your love of virtue, from your very cradle; and I doubted not but *that*, with God's grace, would always be your guard. But you could never be driven; nor was there occasion to drive you—so generous, so noble, so discreet—but how does my love of your amiable qualities increase my affliction; as these recollections must do yours!

You are escaped, my dearest miss—happily, I hope—that is to say, with your honour—else, how great must be your distress!—Yet from your letter I dread the worst.

I am very seldom at Harlowe Place. The house is not the house it used to be, since you went from it. Then they are *so* relentless! And, as I cannot say harsh things of the beloved child of my *heart*, as well as *bosom*, they do not take it *amiss* that I stay away.

I have a little money by me. You say *you are poor yourself*—how grievous are those words from one entitled and accustomed to affluence!—Will you be so good to command it, my beloved young lady?—It is most of it your own bounty to me. And I should take a pride to restore it to its original owner.

Your poor bless you, and pray for you continually. I have so managed your last benevolence, and they have been so healthy, and have had such constant employ, that it has held out; and will hold out, till the happier times return which I continually pray for.

Ruminating on every thing your melancholy letter suggests, and apprehending from the gentleness of your mind, the amiable-ness of your person, and your youth, the further misfortunes and inconveniences to which you may possibly be subjected; I cannot

conclude without asking for your leave to attend you and that in a very earnest manner—and I beg of you not to deny me, on any consideration relating to *myself*, or even to the indisposition of my *other* beloved child; if I can be either of use or comfort to you. Were it, my dearest young lady, but for two or three days, permit me to attend you, although my son's illness should increase, and compel me to come down again at the end of those two or three days.—I repeat my request likewise, that you will command from me the little sum remaining in my hands of your bounty to your poor as well as that dispensed to

Your ever affectionate and faithful servant,

JUDITH NORTON.

Miss Cl. Harlowe to Lady Betty Lawrence.

MADAM,

Thursday, June 29.

I HOPE you will excuse the freedom of this address, from one who has not the honour to be personally known to you, although you must have heard much of Clarissa Harlowe. It is only to beg the favour of a line from your ladyship's hand (by the next post, if convenient) in answer to the following questions.

1. Whether you wrote a letter, dated, as I have a memorandum, Wedn., June 7., congratulating your nephew Lovelace on his supposed nuptials,—and in it reproaching Mr. Lovelace, as guilty of slight, &c., in not having acquainted your ladyship and the family with his marriage?
2. Whether your ladyship wrote to Miss Montague to meet you at Reading, in order to attend you to your cousin Leeson's in Albemarle Street; on your being obliged to be in town on your *old chancery-affair*, I remember are the words? and whether you bespoke your nephew's attendance there on Sunday night the 11th?
3. Whether your ladyship and Miss Montague *did* come to town at that time; and whether you went to Hampstead on Monday, in a hired coach and four, your own being repairing, and took from thence to town the young creature whom you visited there?

Your ladyship will probably guess, that these questions are not asked for reasons favourable to your nephew Lovelace. But be the answer what it will, it can do *him* no hurt, nor me any good; only that I think I owe it to my former hopes (however deceived in them) and even to charity, that a person, of whom I was once willing to think better, should not prove so egregiously abandoned, as to be wanting, in *every* instance, to that veracity which is an indispensable in the character of a gentleman.

Be pleased, madam, to direct to me (keeping the direction

secret for the present) to be left at the Belle Savage or Ludgate Hill, till called for. I am

Your ladyship's most humble servant,

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Lady Betty Lawrence to Miss Cl. Harlowe.

DEAR MADAM,

Saturday, July 1.

I FIND that all is not as it should be between you and my nephew Lovelace. It will very much afflict me, and all his friends, if he has been guilty of any designed baseness to a lady of your character and merit.

We have been long in expectation of an opportunity to congratulate you and ourselves upon an event most earnestly wished for by us all ; since all our hopes of *him* are built upon the power *you* have over him : for if ever man adored a woman, he is that man, and you, madam, are that woman.

God grant, my dearest young lady, that he may not have so heinously offended you, that you *cannot* forgive him ! If you are not already married, and refuse to be his, I shall lose all hopes that he ever will marry, or be the man I wish him to be. So will Lord M. So will Lady Sarah Sadleir.

I will now answer your questions : but indeed I hardly know what to write, for fear of widening still more the unhappy difference between you. But yet such a young lady must command every thing from me.

This then is my answer.

I wrote not any letter to him on or about the 7th of June.

I wrote not to my niece to meet me at Reading, nor to accompany me to my cousin Leeson's in town.

My chancery-affair, though like most chancery-affairs, it be of long standing, is nevertheless now in so good a way, that it cannot give me occasion to go to town.

Nor have I been in town these six months : nor at Hampstead for several years.

Neither shall I have any temptation to go to town, except to pay my congratulatory compliments to Mrs. Lovelace. On which occasion I should go with the greatest pleasure ; and should hope for the favour of your accompanying me to Glenham Hall, for a month at least.

Be what will the reason of your inquiry, let me entreat you, my dear young lady, for Lord M.'s sake ; for my sake ; for this giddy man's sake, soul as well as body ; and for all our family's sakes ; not to suffer this answer to widen differences so far as to make you refuse him, if he a' eady has not the honour of calling

you his; as I am apprehensive he has not, by your signing by your family-name.

And here let me offer to you my mediation to compose the difference between you, be it what it will. Your cause, my dear young lady, cannot be put into the hands of any body living more devoted to your service, than into those of

Your sincere admirer, and humble servant,

ELIZ. LAWRENCE.

Miss Cl. Harlowe to Lady Betty Lawrence.

MADAM,

Monday, July 3.

I CANNOT excuse myself from giving your ladyship this on trouble more; to thank you, as I most heartily do, for your kind letter.

I must own to you, madam, that the honour of being related to ladies as eminent for their virtue as for their descent, was at first no small inducement with me to lend an ear to Mr. Lovelace's address. And the rather, as I was determined, had it come to effect, to do every thing in my power to deserve your favourable opinion.

I had another motive, which I knew would of itself give me merit with your whole family; a presumptuous one, (a punishable presumptuous one as it has proved) in the hope that I might be an humble means in the hand of Providence to reclaim a man, who had, as I thought, good sense enough at bottom to be reclaimed; or at least gratitude enough to acknowledge the intended obligation, whether the generous hope were to succeed or not.

But I have been most egregiously mistaken in Mr. Lovelace; the only man, I persuade myself, pretending to be a gentleman, in whom I could have been *so much* mistaken: for while I was endeavouring to save a drowning wretch, I have been, not accidentally, but premeditatedly, and of set purpose, drawn in after him. And he has had the glory to add to the list of those he has ruined, a name, that I will be bold to say, would not have disparaged his own. And this, madam, by means that would shock humanity to be made acquainted with.

My whole end is served by your ladyship's answer to the questions I took the liberty to put to you in writing. Nor have I a wish to make the unhappy man more odious to you, than is necessary to excuse myself for absolutely declining your offered mediation.

When your ladyship shall be informed of the following particulars.

That, after he had compulsatorily, as I may say, tricked me

into the act of going off with him he could carry me to one of the vilest houses, as it proved in London ;

That he could be guilty of a wicked attempt, in resentment of which, I found means to escape from him to Hampstead ;

That, after he had found me out there, (I know not how) he could procure two women, dressed out richly, to personate your ladyship and Miss Montague ; who, under pretence of engaging me to make a visit in town to your cousin Leeson, (promising to return with me that evening to Hampstead) betrayed me back again to the vile house ; where, again made a prisoner, I was first robbed of my senses ; and then of my honour.—Why should I seek to conceal that disgrace from others, which I cannot hide from myself ?

When your ladyship shall know, that, in the shocking progress to this ruin, wilful falsehoods, repeated forgeries, (particularly of one letter from your ladyship, another from Miss Montague, and a third from Lord M.) and numberless perjuries, were not the least of his crimes : you will judge, that I can have no principles that will make me worthy of an alliance with ladies of yours and your noble sister's character, if I could not from my soul declare, that such an alliance can never *now* take place.

I conclude with my humble thanks to your ladyship, for your favourable opinion of me ; and with the assurance, that I will be, while life is lent me,

Your ladyship's grateful and obliged servant,
CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Mrs. Norton.

Sunday evening, July 2.

How kindly, my beloved Mrs. Norton, do you soothe the anguish of a bleeding heart ! Surely you are my own mother : and by some unaccountable mistake, I must have been laid to a family, that having newly found out, or at least suspected the imposture, cast me from their hearts, with the indignation that such a discovery will warrant.

O that I had been indeed your own child, born to partake of your humble fortunes, an heiress only to that content in which you are so happy ! Then should I have had a *truly* gentle spirit to have guided my ductile heart, which force and ungenerous usage sit so ill upon : and nothing of what has happened would have been.

But let me take heed, that I enlarge not, by impatience, the breach already made in my duty by my rashness ! since had I not erred, my mother, at least, could *never* have been thought hard

hearted and unforgiving. Am I not then answerable not only for my own faults, but for the consequences of them ; which tend to depreciate and bring disgrace upon a maternal character, never before called in question ?

But that I may not make you think me more guilty than I am, give me leave briefly to assure you, that when my story is known, I shall be entitled to more compassion than blame, even on the score of going away with Mr. Lovelace.

As to all that happened afterwards, let me only say, that although I must call myself a lost creature as to this world, yet I have this consolation left me, that I have not suffered either for want of circumspection, or through credulity, or weakness. Not one moment was I off my guard, or unmindful of your early precepts. But (having been enabled to baffle many base contrivances) I was at last ruined by arts the most inhuman. But had I not been rejected by every friend, this low-hearted man had not dared, nor would have had an opportunity, to treat me as he has treated me.

More I cannot, at this time, nor need I, say : and this I desire you to keep to yourself, lest resentments should be taken up when I am gone, that may spread the evil which I hope will end with me.

But one day you may know my whole story !—At present I have neither inclination nor words—O my bursting heart !—Yet a happy, a wished relief—were you present my tears would supply the rest !

* * * *

But although your son should recover, I charge you, my dear Mrs. Norton, that you do not think of coming to me. I don't know still, but your mediation with my mother (although at present your interposition would be so little attended to) may be of use to procure me the revocation of that most dreadful part of my father's curse, which only remains to be fulfilled. The voice of nature must at last be heard in my favour, surely. It will only plead at first to my friends in the still, conscious plaintiveness of a young and unhardened beggar. But it will grow more clamorous when I have the courage to be so, and shall demand, perhaps, the paternal protection from *further* ruin ; and that forgiveness, which those will be little entitled to expect, for their own faults, who shall interpose to have it refused to me ; for an accidental, not a *premeditated* error : and which, but for them, I had never fallen into.

You are very obliging in your offer of money. But although I was forced to leave my clothes behind me, yet I took several things of value with me, which will keep me from present want. You'll say I have made a miserable hand of it—so indeed I have — and, to look backwards. in a very little while too,

But what shall I do, if my father cannot be prevailed upon to recall his malediction? O my dear Mrs. Norton, what a weight must a father's curse have upon a heart so apprehensive as mine!—Did I think I should ever have a *father's curse* to deprecate? And yet, only that the temporary part of it is so terribly fulfilled, or I should be as earnest for its recall, for my *father's* sake, as for my own!

A few words more upon this grievous subject—

When I reflect upon all that has happened to me, it is apparent, that this generally supposed *thoughtless* seducer has acted by me upon a regular and preconcerted plan of villainy.

In order to set his vile plots in motion, nothing was wanting from the first, but to prevail upon me, either by force or fraud, to throw myself into his power: and when this was effected, nothing less than the intervention of the paternal authority (which I had not deserved to be exerted in my behalf) could have saved me from the effect of his deep machinations. Opposition from any other quarter would but too probably have precipitated his barbarous and ungrateful violence: and had *you yourself* been with me, I have reason *now* to think, that somehow or other you would have suffered in endeavoring to save me: for never was there, as now I see, a plan of wickedness more steadily and uniformly pursued than *his* has been, against an unhappy creature who merited better of *him*: but the Almighty has thought fit, according to the general course of his providence, to make the fault bring on its own punishment: but surely not in consequence of my father's dreadful imprecation, "that I might be punished *here*" [O my mamma Norton pray with me, if so, that *here* it stop!] "by the very wretch in whom I had placed my wicked confidence!"

I am sorry for your sake to leave off so heavily. Yet the rest must be brief.

Let me desire you to be secret in what I have communicated to you: at least till you have my consent to divulge it.

God preserve to you your more faultless child!

I will hope for His mercy, although I should not obtain that of any earthly person.

And I repeat my prohibition:—you must not think of coming up to.

Your ever dutiful,

CL. HARLOWE.

Mrs. Norton to Miss Clarissa Harlowe.

Monday night, July 3.

O THE barbarous villainy of this detestable man! And is there

a man in the world, who could offer violence to so sweet a creature!

And are you sure you are now out of his reach?

You command me to keep secret the particulars of the vile treatment you have met with : or else, upon an unexpected visit, which Miss Harlowe favoured me, with, soon after I had received your melancholy letter, I should have been tempted to own that I had heard from you, and to have communicated to her such parts of your two letters as would have demonstrated your penitence, and your earnestness to obtain the revocation of your father's malediction, as well as his protection from outrages that may still be offered to you. But then your sister would probably have expected a sight of your letters, and even to have been permitted to take them with her to the family.

Yet they *must* one day be acquainted with the sad story : and it is impossible but they must pity you, and forgive you when they know your early penitence, and your unprecedented sufferings ; and that you have fallen by the brutal force of a barbarous ravisher, and not by the vile arts of a seducing lover.

The wicked man gives it out at Lord M.'s, as Miss Harlowe tells me, that he is actually married to you—yet she believes it not ; nor had I the heart to let her know the truth.

She put it close to me, whether I had not corresponded with you from the time of your going away ? I could safely tell her (as I did) that I had not : but I said, that I was well informed, that you took extremely to heart your father's imprecation ; and that if she would excuse me I would say, it would be a kind and sisterly part, if she would use her interest to get you discharged from it.

Among other severe things she told me, that my partial fondness for you made me very little consider the honour of the rest of the family : but if I had not heard this from you, she supposed I was set on by Miss Howe.

She expressed herself with a good deal of bitterness against that young lady ; who, it seems, every where, and to every body, (for you must think, that your story is the subject of all conversations) rails against your family ; treating them, as your sister says, with contempt, and even with ridicule.

As to the man you have lost, is an union with such a perjured heart as his, with such an admirable one as yours, to be wished for ? A base, *low-hearted* wretch, as you justly call him, with all his pride of ancestry : and more an enemy to himself with regard to his present and future happiness, than to you, in the barbarous and ungrateful wrongs he has done you : I need not, I am sure, exhort you to despise such a man as this ; since not being able to

do so, would be a reflection upon a sex to which you have always been an honour.

Your moral character is yet untainted : the very nature of your sufferings, as you well observe, demonstrates *that*. Cheer up. therefore, your dear heart, and do not despair ; for is it not GOD who governs the world, and permits some things, and directs others, as he pleases ? And will he not reward *temporary sufferings*, innocently incurred, and piously supported, with *eternal felicity* ?—And what, my dear, is this poor needle's point of NOW to a *boundless* eternity ?

My heart, however, labours under a double affliction : for my poor boy is *very* bad—a violent fever—nor can it be brought to intermit—pray for *him*, my dearest miss—for his recovery, if God see fit—I hope God *will* see fit—if not, (how can I bear to suppose that !) pray for *me*, that he will give me that patience and resignation which I have been wishing to you. I am, my dearest young lady,

Your ever affectionate,
JUDITH NORTON.

Miss Cl. Harlowe to Mrs. Judith Norton.

Thursday, July 6.

I OUGHT not, especially at this time, to add to your afflictions—but yet I cannot help communicating to you (who are now my *only* soothing friend) a new trouble that has befallen me.

I had but one friend in the world, beside you ; and she is utterly displeased with me.* It is grievous, but for one moment, to lie under a beloved person's censure ; and this through imputations that affect one's honour and prudence. There are points so delicate, you know, my dear Mrs. Norton, that it is a degree of dishonour to have a vindication of one's self from them appear to be *necessary*.

I am very sorry Miss Howe is so lively in her resentments on my account. I have always blamed her very freely for her liberties of this sort with my friends. I once had a good deal of influence over her kind heart, and she made all I said a law to her. But people in calamity have little weight in any thing, or with any body. Prosperity and independence are charming things on this account, that they give force to the counsels of a friendly heart ; while it is thought insolence in the miserable to advise, or so much as to remonstrate.

Yet is Miss Howe an invaluable person : and is it to be expected that she should preserve the same regard for my judg-

* See next Letter.

ment that she had before I forfeited all title to discretion? With what face can I take upon me to reproach a want of prudence in *her*? But if I can be so happy as to re-establish myself in her ever-valued opinion, I shall endeavour to enforce upon her your just observation on this head.

You need not, you say, exhort me to despise such a man as him, by whom I have suffered—indeed you need not: for I would choose the cruellest death rather than to be his. And yet, my dear Mrs. Norton, I will own to you, *that once I could have loved him—Ungrateful man!—had he permitted me to love him, I once could have loved him.* Yet he never deserved my love. And was not this a fault?—But now if I can but keep out of his hands, and obtain a last forgiveness, and that as well for the sake of my dear friends' future reflections, as for my own present comfort, it is all that I wish for.

Reconciliation with my friends I do not expect, nor pardon from them; at least, till in extremity, and as a *viaticum*.

O my beloved Mrs. Norton, you cannot imagine what I have suffered!—But indeed my heart is broken!—I am sure I shall not live to take possession of that independence, which you think would enable me to atone in some measure for my past conduct.

While this is my opinion, you may believe I shall not be easy till I can obtain a last forgiveness.

I wish to be left to take my own course, in endeavouring to procure this grace. Yet know I not at present, what that course shall be.

I will write. But to *whom* is my doubt. Calamity has not yet given me the assurance to address myself to my FATHER. My UNCLES (well as they once loved me) are hard-hearted. They never had their masculine passions humanized by the tender name of FATHER. Of my BROTHER I have no hope. I have then but my MOTHER, and my SISTER, to whom I can apply.—“And may I not, my dearest mamma, be permitted to lift up my trembling eye to your all-cheering, and your once *more* than indulgent, your *fond* eye, in hopes of seasonable mercy to the poor sick heart that yet beats with life drawn from your own dearer heart?—Especially when pardon only, and not restoration, is implored?”

Yet were I able to engage my mother's pity, would it not be a means to make *her* still more unhappy, than I have already made her, by the opposition she would meet with, were she to try to give force to that pity?

To my SISTER then, I think, I will apply—yet how hard-hearted has my sister been!—But I will not ask for protection! and yet I am in hourly dread that I shall want protection.—All I will ask for at present (preparative to the last forgiveness I will implore) shall be only to be freed from the heavy curse that

seems to have operated as far as it *can* operate, as to *this* life—and surely, it was passion, and not intention, that carried it so very far as to the *other*!

Your truly sympathizing and dutiful
CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Miss Howe to Miss Clarissa Harlowe.

Superscribed for Mrs. Rachel Clark, etc.

MY DEAR CLARISSA,

Wedn. July 5.

I HAVE at last heard from you from a quarter I little expected. From my mother.

She had for some time seen me uneasy and grieving; and justly supposed it was about you: and this morning dropt a hint which made me conjecture that she must have heard something of you more than I knew. And when she found that this added to my uneasiness, she owned she had a letter in her hands of yours, dated the 29th of June, directed for me.

You may guess that this occasioned a little warmth that could not be wished for by either.

In short, *she* resented that I should disobey her: I was as much concerned that she should open and withhold from me *my* letters: and at last she was pleased to compromise the matter with me, by giving up the letter, and permitting me to write to you *once* or *twice*; she to see the contents of what I wrote. For besides the value she has for you, she could not but have great curiosity to know the occasion of so sad a situation as your melancholy letters shews you to be in.

Need I remind you, Miss Clarissa Harlowe, of *three* letters I wrote to you to none of which I had any answer; except to the *first*, and that a few lines only, promising a letter at large, though you were well enough the day after you received my *second*, to go joyfully back again with him to the vile house? But more of these by-and-by. I must hasten to take notice of your letter of Wednesday last week; which you could *contrive* should fall into my mother's hands.

Let me tell you that that letter has almost broken my heart. Good God! what have you brought yourself to, Miss Clarissa Harlowe?—Could I have believed, that after you had escaped from the miscreant, (with such mighty pains and earnestness escape) and after such an attempt as he had made, you would have been prevailed upon not only to forgive him, but (without being married too) to return with him to that horrid house!—A house I had given you such an account of!—Surprising!—What an intoxi-

cating thing is *this love!*—I *always* feared that you, even you, were not proof against its *inconsistent* effects.

You your *best self* have not escaped!—Indeed I see not how you could expect to escape.

What a tale have you to unfold!—You need not unfold it, my dear, I would have engaged to prognosticate all that has happened, had you but told me that you would once more have put yourself in his power, after you had taken such pains to get out of it.

I tell you, I sent you *three letters*: the *first* of which, dated the 7th and 8th of June, (for it was written at twice) came safe to your hands, as you sent me word by a few lines dated on the 9th: had it not, I should have doubted my own safety; since in it I gave you such an account of the abominable house, and threw such cautions in your way in relation to that Tomlinson, as the more surprised me that you could think of going back to it again, after you had escaped from it, and from Lovelace—O my dear—but nothing now will I ever wonder at!

The *second*, dated June 10, was given into your own hand at Hampstead, on Sunday the 11th, as you was lying upon a couch, in a strange way, according to my messenger's account of you, bloated, and flush-coloured, I don't know how.

The *third* was dated the 20th of June. Having not heard one word from you since the promising billet of the 9th. I own I did not spare you in it. I ventured it by the usual conveyance, by that Wilson's, having no other: so cannot be sure you received it. Indeed, I rather think you might not: because in yours; which fell into my mother's hands, you make no mention of it: and if you had had it, I believe it would have touched you too much to have been passed by unnoticed.

You have heard that I have been ill, you say. I had a cold, indeed; but it was so slight a one, that it confined me not an hour. But I doubt not, that strange things you have *heard* and *been told*, to induce you to take the step, you took. And till you did take that step, (the going back with this villain, I mean) I knew not a more pitiable case than yours: since every body must have excused you before, who knew how you were used at home, and was acquainted with your prudence and vigilance. But, alas! my dear, we see that the *wisest people* are not to be depended upon when *love*, like an *ignis fatuus*, holds up its misleading lights before their eyes.

My love for you, and my concern for your honour, may possibly have made me a little of the severest; if you think so, place it to its proper account *that* love, and to *that* concern: which will but do justice to

Your afflicted and faithful

A. H.

P. S. My mother would not be satisfied without reading my letter herself; and that before I had fixed all my proposed hooks. She has so much real concern for your misfortunes, that thinking it will be a consolation to *you*, and that it will oblige *me*, she consents that you shall write to me the *particulars at large of your sad story*: but it is on condition that I shew her all that has passed between us, relating to yourself and the vilest of men. I have the more cheerfully complied, as the communication cannot be to your disadvantage.

You may therefore write freely, and direct to our own house.

[In answer to the foregoing letter, Clarissa gives a detailed account of all that occurred at Hampstead and afterwards, but as her letters simply rehearse facts which have already been placed before the reader, they are omitted. Here is her account of the black transactions at Mrs. Sinclair's, after she had been carried thither from Hampstead:]

I was made to drink two dishes, with milk, complaisantly urged by the pretended ladies helping me each to one. I was stupid to their hands; and when I took the tea, almost choked with vapours; and could hardly swallow.

I thought, *transiently* thought, that the tea, the last dish particularly, had an odd taste. They, on my palating it, observed that the milk was *London milk*: far short in goodness of what they were accustomed to from their own dairies.

I have no doubt that my two dishes, and perhaps my hartshorn were prepared for me: in which case it was more proper for their purpose, that *they* should help me, than that I should help *myself*. Ill before, I found myself still more and more disordered in my head: a heavy torpid pain increasing fast upon me. But I imputed it to my terror.

Nevertheless, at the pretended ladies' motion, I went up stairs, attended by Dorcas: who affected to weep for joy, that she once more saw my *blessed* face; that was the vile creature's word, and immediately I set about taking out of some of my clothes, ordering what should be put up, and what sent after me.

While I was thus employed, up came the pretended Lady Betty, in a hurrying way—My dear, you won't be long before you are ready. My nephew is very busy in writing answers to his letters: so I'll just whip away and change my dress, and call upon you in an instant.

O madam!—*I am* ready! I am *now* ready!—You must not leave me here. And down I sunk, affrighted, into a chair.

This instant, this instant I will return—before you can be ready—before you can have packed up your things—we would not be late—the robbers we have heard of may be out—don't let us be late.

And away she hurried before I could say another word. Her pretended niece went with her, without taking notice to me of her going.

I had no suspicion yet, that these women were not indeed the ladies they personated; and I blamed myself for my weak fears.—It cannot *be*, thought I, that *such* ladies will abet treachery against a poor creature they are so fond of. They must undoubtedly *be* the persons they *appear* to be—what folly to doubt it! The air, the dress, the dignity of women of quality. How unworthy of them, and of my charity, concluded I, is this ungenerous shadow of suspicion!

So recovering my stupefied spirits, as well as they could be recovered, (for I was heavier and heavier: and wondered to Dorcas, what ailed me: rubbing my eyes and taking some of her snuff, pinch after pinch, to very little purpose) I pursued my employment: but when that was over, all packed up that I designed to be packed up; and I had nothing to do but to *think*: and found them tarry so long; I thought I should have gone distracted. I shut myself into the chamber that had been mine; I kneeled, I prayed; yet knew not what I prayed for: then ran out again: it was almost dark night, I said; where, where was Mr. Lovelace?

He came to me, taking no notice at first of my consternation and wildness [what they had given me made me incoherent and wild:] All goes well, said he, my dear!

All indeed did go well for the villainous project of the most cruel and most villainous of men!

I *demand*ed his aunt!—I *demand*ed his cousin!—The evening, I said, was closing!—My head was very, *very* bad, I remember I said—and it grew worse and worse—

Terror, however, as yet kept up my spirits; and I insisted upon his going himself to hasten them.

He called his servant. He raved at the *sex* for *their* delay 'twas well that business of consequence seldom depended upon such parading, unpunctual triflers!

His servant came.

He offered him to fly to his cousin Leeson's, and to let Lady Betty and his cousin know how uneasy we both were at their delay: adding of his own accord, Desire them, if they don't come instantly, to send their coach, and we will go without them. Tell them I wonder they'll serve me so!

I thought this was considerably and fairly put. But now, indifferent as my head was, I had a little time to consider the man and his behaviour. He terrified me with his looks, and with his violent emotions, as he gazed upon me. Evident *joy-suppressed* emotions, as I have since recollected. His sentences short, and pronounced as if his *breath* were touched. Never saw I his

abominable eyes look, as then they looked—triumph in them!—Fierce and wild; and more disagreeable than the women's at the vile house appeared to me when I first saw them: and at times, such a leering mischief-boding cast!—I would have given the world to have been an hundred miles from him.

I complained once or twice of thirst. My mouth seemed parched. At the time, I supposed that it was my terror (gasping often as I did for breath) that parched up the roof of my mouth. I called for water: some table-beer was brought me: beer, I suppose, was a better vehicle (if I were not dosed enough before) for their potions. I told the maid, that she knew I seldom tasted malt-liquor: yet, suspecting nothing of this nature, being extremely thirsty, I drank it, as what came next: and instantly, as it were, found myself much worse than before; as if inebriated, I should fancy: I know not how.

His servant was gone twice as long as he needed: and just before his return, came one of the pretended Lady Betty's with a letter for Mr. Lovelace.

He sent it up to me. I read it: and then it was that I thought myself a lost creature: it being to put off her going to Hampstead that night, on account of violent fits which Miss Montague was pretended to be seized with; for then immediately came into my head his vile attempt upon me in this house; the revenge that my flight might too probably inspire him with on that occasion, and because of the difficulty I made to forgive him, and to be reconciled to him: his very looks wild and dreadful to me; and the women of the house such as I had more reason than ever, even from the pretended Lady Betty's hint, to be afraid of: all these crowding together in my apprehensive mind, I fell into a kind of frenzy.

I have not remembrance how I was, for the time it lasted: but I know, that in my first agitations I pulled off my head-dress and, tore my ruffles in twenty tatters, and ran to find him out.

When a little recovered I insisted upon the hint he had given of their coach. But the messenger, he said, had told him, that it was sent to fetch a physician, lest his chariot should be put up, or not ready.

I then insisted upon going directly to Lady Betty's lodgings.

Mrs. Leeson's was now a crowded house, he said, and as my earnestness could be owing to nothing but groundless apprehension, [and O what vows, what protestations of his honour, did he then make!] he hoped I would not add to their present concern. Charlotte, indeed, was used to fits, he said, upon any great surprises, whether of joy or grief: and they would hold her for a week together, if not got off in a few hours.

All impatient with grief and apprehension, I still declared mv-

self resolved not to stay in that house till morning. All I had in the world, my rings, my watch, my little money, for a coach : or if one were not to be got, I would go on foot to Hampstead that night, though I walked it by myself.

A coach was hereupon sent for, or pretended to be sent for. Any price, he said, he would give to oblige me, late as it was ; and he would attend me with all his soul. But no coach was to be got.

Let me cut short the rest. I grew worse and worse in my head ; now stupid, now raving, now senseless. The vilest of vile women was brought to frighten me. Never was there so horrible a creature, as she appeared to me at the time.

I remember, I pleaded for mercy. I remember that I said *I would be his—indeed I would be his*—to obtain his mercy. But no mercy found I ! My strength, my intellects failed me—and then such scenes followed—O my dear, such dreadful scenes !—Fits upon fits (faintly indeed and imperfectly remembered) procuring me no compassion—but death was withheld from me. That would have been too great a mercy !

* * * *

Thus was I tricked and deluded back by blacker hearts of my own sex, than I thought there were in the world ; who appeared to me to be persons of honour : and, when in his power, thus barbarously was I treated by this villainous man !

I was so senseless, that I dare not aver that the horrid creatures of the house were personally aiding and abetting : but some visionary remembrances I have of female figures, flitting, as I may say, before my sight ; the wretched woman's particularly. But as these confused ideas might be owing to the terror I had conceived of the worse than masculine violence she had been permitted to assume to me, for expressing my abhorrence of her house ; and as what I suffered from his barbarity wants not that aggravation ; I will say no more on a subject so shocking as this must ever be to my remembrance.

I never saw the personating wretches afterwards. He persisted to the last (dreadfully invoking heaven as a witness to the truth of his assertion) that they were really and truly the ladies they pretended to be ; declaring that they could not take leave of me, when they left the town, because of the state of senselessness and frenzy I was in. For their intoxicating or rather stupefying potions had almost deleterious effects upon my intellects, as I have hinted ; insomuch that, for several days together, I was under a strange delirium ; now moping, now dozing, now weeping, now raving, now scribbling, tearing what I scribbled, as fast as I wrote it ; *most* miserable when now and then a ray of reason brought confusedly to my remembrance what I had suffered.

* * * *

The very hour that I found myself in a place of safety, I took pen to write to you. When I began, I designed only to write six or eight lines, to inquire after your health: for having heard nothing from you, I feared, *indeed*, that you *had been*, and *still were*, too ill to write. But no sooner did my pen begin to blot the paper, but my sad heart hurried it into length. The apprehensions I had lain under, that I should not be able to get away; the fatigue I had in effecting my escape: the difficulty of procuring a lodging for myself: having disliked the people of two houses, and those of a third disliking me; for you must think I made a frightened appearance—these, together with the recollection of what I suffered from him, and my further apprehensions of my insecurity, and my desolate circumstances, had so disordered me, that I remember I rambled strangely in that letter.

In short, I thought it, on reperusal, a half-distracted one: but I then despaired (were I to begin again) of writing better: so I let it go: and can have no excuse for directing it as I did, if the cause of the incoherence in it will not furnish me with a very pitiable one.

The letter I received from your mother was a dreadful blow to me. But nevertheless it had the good effect upon me (labouring, as I did just then, under a violent fit of vapourish despondency, and almost yielding to it) which profuse bleeding and blisterings have in paralytical and apoplectical strokes: reviving my attention, and restoring me to spirits to combat the evils I was surrounded by—sluicing off, and diverting into a new channel (if I may be allowed another metaphor) the overcharging woes which threatened once more to overwhelm my intellects.

But yet I most sincerely lamented (and still lament) in your mother's words, *that I cannot be unhappy by myself*; and was grieved, not only for the trouble I had given you before; but for the new one I had brought upon you by my inattention.

And now, honoured madam, and my dearest Miss Howe, who are to sit in judgment upon my case, permit me to lay down my pen with one request, which, with the greatest earnestness, I make to you both: and that is, that you will neither of you open your lips in relation to the potions and the violences I have hinted at.—Not that I am solicitous, that my disgrace should be hidden from the world, or that it should not be generally known, that the man has proved a villain to me: for this, it seems, every body but myself expected from his character. But suppose, as his actions by me are really of a *capital nature*, it were insisted upon, that I should appear to prosecute him, and his accomplices, in a court of justice, how do you think I could bear that?

But since my character, *before* the capital enormity, was lost in the eye of the world; and that from the very hour I left my

father's house ; and since all my own hopes of worldly happiness are entirely over ; let me slide quietly into my grave ; and let it not be remembered, except by one friendly tear, and no more, dropt from your gentle eye, mine own dear Anna Howe, on the happy day that shall shut up all my sorrows, that there was such a creature as

Saturday, July 8.

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Miss Howe to Miss Clarissa Harlowe.

Sunday, July 2.

MAY heaven signalize its vengeance in the face of all the world upon the most abandoned and profligate of men !—And in its own time, I doubt not but it will.—And we must look to a WORLD BEYOND THIS for the reward of your sufferings !

Another shocking detection, my dear !—How have you been deluded !—Very watchful I have thought you : very sagacious :—but, alas ! not watchful, not sagacious enough, for the horrid villain you have had to deal with !

The letter you sent me inclosed as mine, of the 7th of June, is a villainous forgery. The hand, indeed, is astonishingly like mine : and the cover, I see, is actually my cover : but yet the letter is not so exactly imitated, but that (had you had any suspicions about his vileness at the time) you, who so well know my hand, might have detected it.

Apprehensive for *both* our safeties from the villainy of such a daring and profligate contriver, I must call upon you, my dear, to resolve upon taking legal vengeance of the infernal wretch. And this not only for our own sakes, but for the sakes of innocents who otherwise may yet be deluded and outraged by him.

She then gives the particulars of the report made by the young fellow whom she sent to Hampstead with her letter ; and who supposed he had delivered it into her own hand ; and then proceeds.

I am astonished, that the vile wretch, who could know nothing of the time my messenger (whose honesty I can vouch for) would come, could have a creature ready to personate you ! Strange, that the man should happen to arrive just as you were gone to church, (as I find was the fact, on comparing what he says, with your hint that you were at church twice that day) when he might have got to Mrs. Moore's two hours before !—But had you told me, my dear, that the villain had found you out, and was about

you !—You should have done that—yet I blame you upon a judgment founded on the *event* only !

I enclose not only the rough draft of my long letter mentioned above ; but the heads of that which the young fellow thought he delivered into your own hands at Hampstead. And when you have perused them, I will leave you to judge, how much reason I had to be surprised, that you wrote me not an answer to either of those letters ; one of which you owned you had received (though it proved to be his forged one) : the other delivered into your own hands, as I was assured ; and both of them of so much concern to your honour : and still how much more surprised I must be, when I received a letter from Mrs. Townsend, dated June 15 from Hampstead, importing, “ That Mr. Lovelace, who had been with you several days, had on the Monday before, brought lady Betty and his cousin, richly dressed, and in a coach and four, to visit you : who, with your own consent, had carried you to town with them—to your former lodgings : where you still were : that the Hampstead women believed you to be married ; and reflected upon me as a fomentor of differences between man and wife : that he himself was at Hampstead the day before ; viz. Wednesday the 14th ; and boasted of his happiness with you : inviting Mrs. Moore, Mrs. Bevis, and Miss Rawlins to go to town, to visit his spouse ; which they promised to do : that he declared, that you were entirely reconciled to your former lodgings :—and that finally, the women at Hampstead told Mrs. Townsend, that he had very handsomely discharged theirs.”

I own to you, my dear, that I was so much surprised and disgusted at these appearances against a conduct till then unexceptionable, that I was resolved to make myself as easy as I could, and wait till you should think fit to write to me. But I could rein-in my impatience but for a few days ; and on the 20th of June I wrote a sharp letter to you, which I find you did not receive.

What a fatality, my dear, has appeared in your case, from the very beginning till this hour ! Had my mother permitted—

But can I blame *her* ; when you have a *father* and *mother* living, who have so much to answer for ? so much ;—as no father and mother, considering the child they have driven, persecuted, exposed, renounced—ever had to answer for !

Begging excuse for all the harsh things in my last, of which your sweet meekness and superiour greatness of soul have now made me most heartily ashamed, I beseech you, my dearest creature, to believe me to be,

Your truly sympathising
and unalterable friend,

* * * *

My mother will have me add, that she must *insist* upon your prosecuting the villain. She repeats that she makes that a condition on which she permits our future correspondence. Let me therefore know your thoughts upon it. I asked her, if she would be willing that I should appear to support you in court, if you complied?—By all means she said, if that would induce you to begin with him, and with the horrid women. I think I could attend you, I am *sure* I could, were there but a probability of bringing the monster to his deserved end.

Once more your thoughts of it, supposing it were to meet with the approbation of your relations.

But whatever be your determination on this head, it shall be my constant prayer, that God will give you patience to bear your heavy afflictions, as a person ought to do who has not brought them upon herself by a faulty will: that he will speak peace and comfort to your wounded mind; and give you many happy years. I am, and ever will be,

Your affectionate and faithful

ANNA HOWE.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.

Tuesday, July 11.

Forgive you, my dear!—most cordially do I forgive you—will you forgive me for some sharp things I wrote in return to yours of the 5th? You could not have loved me as you do, nor had the concern you have always shewn for my honour, if you had not been utterly displeased with me, on the appearance which my conduct wore to you when you wrote that letter. I most heartily thank you, my best and only love, for the opportunity you gave me of clearing it up: and for being generously ready to acquit me of intentional blame, the moment you had read my melancholy narrative.

I am far from thinking myself out of the reach of this man's further violence. But what can I do? Whither can I fly?—Perhaps my bad state of health (which must grow worse, as recollection of the past evils, and reflections upon them, grow heavier upon me) may be my protection. Once, indeed, I thought of going abroad; and had I the prospects of many years before me. I would go—but, my dear, the blow is given.—Nor have you reason, now, circumstanced as I am, to be concerned that it is. What a heart must I have, if it be not broken!—And indeed, my dear friend, I do so earnestly wish for the last closing scene, and with so much comfort find myself in a declining way, that I even

sometimes ungratefully regret that naturally healthy constitution, which used to double upon me all my enjoyments.

As to the earnestly recommended prosecution, I may possibly touch upon it more largely hereafter, if ever I shall have better spirits: for they are at present extremely sunk and low. But, just now, I will only say, that I would sooner suffer every evil (the repetition of the capital one excepted) than appear publicly in a court to do myself justice. And I am heartily grieved, that your mother prescribes such a measure as the condition of our future correspondence; for the continuance of your friendship, my dear, and the desire I had to correspond with you to my life's end, were all my remaining hopes and consolation. Nevertheless, as that friendship is in the power of the *heart*, not of the *hard* only, I hope I shall not forfeit that.

O my dear! what would I give to obtain a revocation of my father's malediction! A reconciliation is not to be hoped for. You who never loved my father, may think my solicitude on this head a weakness: but the *motive* for it, sunk as my spirits at times are, is not *always weak*.

* * * *

Miss Howe to Miss Clarissa Harlowe.

Wedn. night, July 12.

I WRITE, my dearest creature, I cannot *but* write, to express my concern on your dejection. Let me beseech you, my charming excellence, let me beseech you, not to give way to it.

Comfort yourself, on the contrary, in the triumphs of a virtue unsullied; a will wholly faultless. Who could have withstood the trials that you have surmounted?—Your cousin Morden will soon come. He will see justice done you, I make no doubt, as well with regard to what concerns your person as your estate. And many happy days may you yet see: and much good may you still do, if you will not heighten unavoidable accidents into guilty despondency.

I shall send this short letter [I am obliged to make it a short one] by *young* Rogers, as we call him; the fellow I sent to you to Hampstead; an innocent, though pragmatical rustic. Admit him, I pray you, into your presence, that he may report to me how you look, and how you are.

Mr. Hickman should attend you: but I apprehend, that all his motions, and my own too, are watched by the execrable wretch: as indeed his are by an agent of mine: for I own, that I am so apprehensive of his plots and revenge, now I know that he has intercepted my vehement letters against him, that he is the subject of my dreams, as well as of my waking fears.

* * * *

My mother, at my earnest importunity, has just given me leave to write, and to receive your letters—but fastened this condition upon the concession, that yours must be under cover to Mr. Hickman [this with a view, I suppose to give him consideration with me]; and upon this further condition, that she is to see all we write.—“When girls are set upon a point,” she told one, who told me again, “it is better for a mother, if possible, to make herself of their party, than to oppose them: since there will be then hopes that she will still hold the reins in her own hands.”

Pray let me know what the people are with whom you lodge?

Adieu, my dearest creature. Comfort *yourself*, as you would in the like unhappy circumstances comfort

Your own

ANNA HOWE.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.

Thursday, July 13.

I AM extremely concerned, my dear Miss Howe, for being primarily the occasion of the apprehensions you have of this wicked man's vindictive attempts. What a wide-spreading error is mine!—

If I find that he sets on foot any machination against you, or against Mr. Hickman, I do assure you I will consent to prosecute him, although I were sure I should not survive my first appearance at the bar he should be arraigned at.

I own the justice of your mother's arguments on that subject; but must say, that I think there are circumstances in my particular case, which will excuse me, although on a slighter occasion than that you are apprehensive of, I should decline to appear against him.

Your messenger has now *indeed* seen me. I talked with him on the cheat put upon him at Hampstead: and am sorry to have reason to say, that had not the poor young man been very *simple*, and very *self-sufficient*, he had not been so grossly deluded. Mrs. Bevis has the same plea to make for herself. A good-natured thoughtless woman; not used to converse with so vile and so specious a deceiver as him, who made his advantage of both these shallow creatures.

I think I cannot be more private than where I am. I hope I am safe. All the risk I run, is in going out, and returning from morning prayers; which I have two or three times ventured to do; once at Lincoln's-Inn chapel, at eleven; once at St. Dunstan's Fleet street, at seven in the morning, in a chair both times and twice at six in the morning, at the neighbouring church in

Covent Garden. The wicked wretches I have escaped from, will not, I hope come to church to look for me; especially at so early prayers; and I have fixed upon the privatest pew in the latter *church* to hide myself in; and perhaps I may lay out a little matter in an ordinary gown, by way of disguise; my face half hid by my cap.—I am very careless, my dear, of my appearance now. Neat and clean, takes up the whole of my attention.

The man's name at whose house I lodge, is Smith—a glove *maker*, as well as *seller*. His wife is the shop-keeper. A dealer also in stockings, ribbons, snuff, and perfumes. A matron-like woman, plain-hearted, and prudent. The husband an honest, industrious man. And they live in good understanding with each other: a proof with me, that their hearts are right; for where a married couple live together upon ill terms, it is a sign, I think, that each knows something amiss of the other, either with regard to temper or morals, which if the world knew as well as themselves, it would perhaps as little like them, as such people like each other. Happy the marriage, where neither man nor wife has any wilful or premeditated evil in their general conduct to reproach the other with!—For even persons who have bad hearts will have a veneration for those who have good ones.

Two neat rooms, with plain, but clean furniture on the first floor, are mine; one they call the dining room.

There is, up another pair of stairs, a very worthy widow lodger, Mrs. Lovick by name; who, although of low fortunes, is much respected, as Mrs. Smith assures me, by people of condition of her acquaintance, for her piety, prudence, and understanding. With her I propose to be well acquainted.

But, nevertheless, the irreconcilableness of my relations whom I love with an unabated reverence; my apprehensions of fresh violences [this wicked man, I doubt, will not yet let me rest]; my being destitute of protection; my youth, my sex, my unacquaintedness with the world, subjecting me to insults: my reflections on the scandal I have given, added to the sense of the indignities I have received from a man, of whom I deserved not ill; all together will undoubtedly bring on the effect, that cannot be undesirable to me.—The slower, however, perhaps from my natural good constitution; and, as I presume to imagine, from principles which I hope will, in due time, and by due reflection, set me *above the sense of all worldly disappointments*.

At present, my head is much disordered. I have not indeed enjoyed it with any degree of clearness since the violence done to that, and to my heart too, by the wicked arts of the abandoned creatures I was cast among.

I must have more conflicts. At times I find myself not subdued enough to my condition, I will welcome those conflicts as

they come, as *probationary* ones—but yet my father's malediction—the temporary part so strangely and so literally completed!—I cannot, however, think, when my mind is *strongest*—but what is the story of Isaac, and Jacob, and Esau, and of Rebekah's cheating the latter of the blessing designed for him (in favour of Jacob) given us for in the 27th chapter of Genesis? My father used, I remember, to enforce the doctrine deducible from it, on his children, by many arguments. At least therefore, *he* must believe there is great weight in the curse he has announced; and shall I not be solicitous to get it revoked, that he may not hereafter be grieved, for my sake, that he did *not* revoke it?

All I will at present add, are my thanks to your mother for her indulgence to us. Due compliments to Mr. Hickman; and my request that you will believe me to be, to my last hour, and beyond it, if possible, my beloved friend, and my *dearer* self (for what is now myself!)

Your obliged and affectionate

CL. HARLOWE.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

Friday, July 7.

I HAVE three of thy letters at once before me to answer; in each of which thou complainest of my silence; and in one of them tellest me, that thou canst not live without I scribble to thee every day, or every other day at least.

Why, then, die, Jack, if thou wilt. What heart, thinkest thou, can I have to write, when I have lost the only subject worth writing upon?

Help me again to my angel, to my CLARISSA: and thou shalt have a letter from me, or writing at least, part of a letter, every hour. All that the charmer of my heart shall say, that will I put down: every motion, every air of her beloved person, every look will I try to describe; and when she is silent, I will endeavour to tell thee her thoughts, either what they are, or what I would have them to be—so that, having *her*, I shall never want a subject. Having lost her, my whole soul is a blank: the whole creation round me, the elements above, beneath, and every thing I *behold* (for nothing can I *enjoy*) are a blank without her.

O return, return, thou only charmer of my soul! Return to thy adoring Lovelace! What is the light, what the air, what the town, what the country, what's any thing without thee? Light, air, joy, harmony, in my notion, are but parts of thee; and could they be all expressed in one word, that word would be CLARISSA.

O my beloved CLARISSA, return thou then; once more return

to bless thy LOVELACE, who now by the loss of thee, knows the value of the jewel he has slighted ; and rises every morning but to curse the sun that shines upon every body but him !

* * * *

Well, but Jack, 'tis a surprising thing to me, that the dear fugitive cannot be met with ; cannot be heard of. She is so poor a plotter (for plotting is not her talent) that I am confident, had I been at liberty, I should have found her out before now ; although the different emissaries I have employed about town, round the adjacent villages, and in Miss Howe's vicinage, have hitherto failed of success. But my lord continues so weak and low-spirited, that there is no getting from him. I would not disoblige a man whom I think in danger still : for would his gout, now it has got him down, but give him, like a fair boxer, the rising blow, all would be over with him.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

Sunday night, July 9.

Now, Jack, have I a subject with a vengeance. I am in the very height of my trial for all my sins to my beloved fugitive. For here to-day, at about five o'clock, arrived Lady Sarah Sadlier and Lady Betty Lawrence, each in her chariot and six.

Lady Sarah, I soon found, was raised to this visit by Lady Betty ; who has health enough to allow her to look out of herself, and out of her own affairs, for business. Yet congratulation to Lord M. on his amendment [spiteful devils on both accounts !] was the avowed errand. But coming in my absence, I was their principal subject ; and they had opportunity to set each other's heart against me.

Simon Parsons hinted this to me, as I passed by the steward's office ; for it seems they talked loud, and he was making up some accounts with old Pritchard.

However, I hastened to pay my duty to them. With horrible grave faces was I received. The two antiques only bowed their tabby heads ; making longer faces than ordinary ; and all the old lines appearing strong in their furrowed foreheads and fallen cheeks ; How do you do, sir ? and, How do you do, Mr. Lovelace ? looking all round at one another, as who should say, do you speak first : and, do you : for they seemed resolved to lose no time.

I took my seat. Lord M. looked horribly glum ; his fingers claspt, and turning round and round, under and over, his but just disgouted thumbs ; his sallow face, and goggling eyes, cast upon the floor, on the fire-place, on his two sisters, on his two nieces, by turns, but not once deigning to look upon me.

At last, Mr. Lovelace !—Cousin Lovelace !—Hein !—Hem !—

I am sorry, very sorry, hesitated Lady Sarah, that there is no hope of your ever taking up—

What's the matter *now*, madam?

The matter now!—Why, Lady Betty has two letters from Miss Harlowe, which have told us what's the matter—are all women alike with you?

Then they all choruss'd upon me—Such a character as Miss Harlowe's! cried one—A lady of so much generosity and good sense! another—How charmingly she writes! the two maiden monkeys; looking at her fine handwriting: her perfections my crimes. What can you expect will be the end of these things! cried Lady Sarah. D—n'd, d—n'd doings! vociferated the peer, shaking his loose-flesh'd wabbling chaps, which hung on his shoulders like an old cows dewlap,

For my part, I hardly knew whether to sing or say, what I had to reply to these all-at-once attacks upon me!—Fair and softly, ladies—one at a time, I beseech you. I am not to be hunted down without being heard, I hope. Pray let me see these letters. I beg you will let me see them.

There they are:—that's the first—read it out, if you can.

I open'd a letter from my charmer, dated *Thursday, June 29*, our wedding-day that was to be, and written to Lady Betty Lawrence. By the contents, to my great joy, I find the dear creature is alive and well, and in charming spirits. But the direction where to send an answer was so scratched out, that I could not read it; which afflicted me much.

She puts three questions in it to Lady Betty.

Ist, about a letter of hers, dated *June 7*, congratulating me on my nuptials, and which I was so good as to save Lady Betty the trouble of writing—a very civil thing of me, I think!

Again—"Whether she and one of her nieces Montague were to go to town, on an old chancery suit?"—And, "Whether they actually did go to town accordingly, and to Hampstead afterwards?" and, "Whether they brought to town from thence the young creature whom they visited;" was the subject of the second and third questions.

A little inquisitive dear rogue! and what did she expect to be the better for these questions?—But curiosity, d—n'd curiosity, is the itch of the sex—yet when didst thou know it turned to their benefit?—For they seldom inquire, but when they fear—and the proverb, as my lord has it, says, *it comes with a fear*. That is, I suppose, what they fear generally happens, because there is generally occasion for the fear.

Well, madam, said I, with as much philosophy as I could assume; and may I ask—pray, what was your ladyship's answer?

This answer was dated *July 1*. A very kind and complaisant one to the lady, but very so-so to her poor kinsman—that people can give up their own flesh and blood with so much ease!—She tells her “how proud all our family would be of an alliance with such an excellence.” She does me justice in saying how much I adore her, as an angel of a woman; and begs of her, for I know not how many sakes, besides my soul’s sake, “that she will be so good as to have me for an husband:” and answers—thou wilt guess how—to the lady’s questions.

Well, madam; and pray, may I be favoured with the lady’s other letter? I presume it is in reply to yours.

They gave me the letter: I read it through to myself:—and by the repetition of what I said, thou wilt guess at the remaining contents.

You shall find, ladies, you shall find, my lord, that I will not spare myself. Then holding the letter in my hand, and looking upon it, as a lawyer upon his brief;

Miss Harlowe says, “that when your ladyship” [turning to Lady Betty] “shall know, that, in the progress to her ruin, wilful falsehoods, repeated forgeries, and numberless perjuries, were not the least of my crimes, you will judge that she can have no principles that will make her worthy of an alliance with ladies of yours, and your noble sister’s character, if she could not, from her soul, declare, that such an alliance can never now take place.”

Surely, ladies, this is passion! This is not reason. If our family would not think themselves dishonoured by my marrying a person whom I had so treated; but, on the contrary, would rejoice that I did her this justice; and if she has come out pure gold from the assay; and has nothing to reproach herself with; why should it be an impeachment of her principles, to consent that such an alliance should take place?

She cannot think herself the worse, *justly* she cannot, for what was done against her will.

Their countenances menaced a general uproar—but I proceeded.

But my fair accuser says, that, “I have added to the list of those I have ruined, a name, that would not have disparaged my own.” It is true, I have been gay and enterprising. It is in my constitution to be so. I know not how I came by such a constitution: but I was never accustomed to check or control: that you all know. When a man finds himself hurried by passion into a slight offence, which, however slight, will not be forgiven, he may be made desperate: as a thief, who only intends a robbery, is often by resistance, and for self-preservation, drawn in to commit murder.

I was a strange, a horrid wretch with every one. But he must be a silly fellow who has not something to say for himself, when

every cause has its black and its white side.—Westminster Hall, Jack, affords every day as confident defences as mine.

But what right, proceeded I, has this lady to complain of me, when she as good as says—Here, Lovelace, you have acted the part of a villain by me.—You would *repair your fault*: but I won't let you, that I may have the satisfaction of exposing you; and the pride of refusing you.

But, was that the case? Was that the case? Would I pretend to say, I would *now* marry the lady, if she would have me?

Lovel. You find she renounces Lady Betty's mediation—

Lord M. [interrupting me] *Words are wind; but deeds are mind.* What signifies your cursed quibbling, Bob?—Say plainly, if she will have you, will you have her? Answer me, yes or no; and lead us not a *wild-goose chase* after your meaning.

Lovel. She knows I would. But here, my lord, if she thus goes on to expose herself and me, she will make it a dishonour to us both to marry.

The next article of my indictment was for forgery: and for personating of Lady Betty and my cousin Charlotte. Two shocking charges, thou'lt say: and so they were!—The peer was outrageous upon the *forgery* charge. The ladies vowed never to forgive the *personating* part. Not a peace-maker among them. So we all turned women, and scolded.

My lord told me, that he believed in his conscience there was not a viler fellow upon *God's earth* than me.—What signifies mincing the matter? said he—and that it was not the first time I had forged his hand.

Miss Ch. If Mr. Lovelace has nothing to object against the lady's character, (and I presume to think he is not *ashamed* to do her justice, though it may make against himself) I cannot see but honour and generosity will compel from him all that we expect. If there were any levities, any weaknesses to be charged upon the lady, I should not open my lips in her favour; though in private I would pity her, and deplore her hard hap. And yet, even then, there might not want arguments, from honour and gratitude, in so particular a case, to engage you, sir, to make good the vows it is plain you have broken.

Lady Betty. My niece Charlotte has called upon you so justly, and has put the question to you so properly, that I cannot but wish you would speak to it directly, and without evasion.

All in a breath they bespoke my seriousness, and my justice: and in this manner I delivered myself, assuming an air sincerely solemn.

“I am very sensible, that the performance of the task you have put me upon, will leave me without excuse: but I will not have recourse either to evasion or palliation.

"As my cousin Charlotte has severely observed, I am not *ashamed* to do justice to Miss Harlowe's merit.

"I own to you all, and what is more, with high regret (if not with *shame*, cousin Charlotte) that I have a great deal to answer for in my usage of this lady. The sex has not a nobler mind, nor a lovelier person of it. And, for *virtue*, I could not have believed, (excuse me, ladies) that there ever was a woman who *gave*, or *could* have given, such illustrious, such uniform proofs of it: for, in her whole conduct, she has shown herself to be equally above temptation and art; and, I had almost said, human frailty.

"The step she so freely blames herself for taking, was truly what she calls *compulsatory*: for though she was provoked to *think* of going off with me, she intended it not, nor was provided to do so: neither would she ever have had the *thought* of it, had her relations left her free, upon her offered composition to renounce the man she did *not* hate, in order to avoid the man she *did*.

"It piqued my pride, I own, that I could so little depend upon the force of those impressions which I had the vanity to hope I had made in a heart so delicate; and in my worst devices against her, I encouraged myself that I abused no confidence; for none had she in my honour.

"The evils she has suffered, it would have been more than a miracle had she avoided. Her watchfulness rendered more plots abortive, than those which contributed to her fall; and they were many and various. And all her greater trials and hardships were owing to her noble resistance, and just resentment.

"I know, proceeded I, how much I condemn myself in the justice I am doing to this excellent creature. But yet I *will* do her justice, and cannot help it if I would. And I hope this shews that I am not so totally abandoned, as I have been thought to be.

"Indeed, with me, she has done more honour to her sex in her fall, if it be called a fall (in truth it ought not) than ever any other could do in her standing.

"When, at length, I had given her watchful virtue cause of suspicion, I was then indeed obliged to make use of power and art to prevent her escaping from me. She then formed contrivances to elude mine; but all *hers* were such as strict truth and punctilious honour would justify. She could not stoop to deceit and falsehood, no, not to save herself. More than once justly did she tell me, fired by conscious worthiness, that her soul was my soul's superior!—Forgive me, ladies, for saying, that till I knew *her*, I questioned a soul in a sex, created, as I was willing to suppose, only for temporary purposes.—It is not to be imagined

into what absurdities men of free principles run in order to justify to themselves their free practices ; and to make a religion to their minds : and yet, in this respect, I have not been faulty as some others.

" No wonder that such a noble creature as this looked upon every studied artifice, as a degree of baseness not to be forgiven : no wonder that she could so easily become averse to the man (though once she beheld him with an eye not wholly indifferent) whom she thought capable of premeditated guilt—Nor, give me leave on the other hand, to say, is it to be wondered at, that the man who found it so difficult to be forgiven for the *slighter* offences, and who had not the grace to recede or repent (made desperate) should be hurried on to the commission of the *greater*.

" In short, ladies, in a word, my lord, Miss Clarissa Harlowe is an angel ; if ever there was or could be one in human nature, and is, and ever was, as pure as an angel in her will : and this justice I must do her, although the question, I see by every glistening eye, is ready to be asked, What, then, Lovelace, art thou?"

Lord M. A devil!—A d—ned devil! I must answer. And may the curse of God follow you in all you undertake, if you do not make her the best amends now in your power to make her!

Lovel. From you, my lord, I could expect no other: but from the ladies I hope for less violence, from the ingenuousness of my confession.

The ladies, elder and younger, had their hand-kerchiefs to their eyes, at the just testimony which I bore to the merits of this exalted creature ; and which I would make no scruple to bear at the bar of a court of justice, were I to be called to it.

Lady Betty. Well, sir, this is a noble character. If you think as you speak, surely you cannot refuse to do the lady all the justice now in your power to do her.

They all joined in this demand.

I pleaded, that I was sure she would not have me : that, when she had taken a resolution, she was not to be moved : unpersuadableness was an Harlowe sin : that, and her name, I told them, were all she had of theirs.

All were of opinion, that she might, in her present desolate circumstances, be brought to forgive me. Lady Sarah said, that Lady Betty and she would endeavour to find out the *noble sufferer*, as they justly called her ; and would take her into their protection, and be guarantees of the justice that I would do her as well after marriage as before.

I supposed, I said, that her ladyship might have a private

direction where to send to her. I spoke as I wished: I would have given the world to have heard that she was inclined to cultivate the interest of any of my family.

Lady Betty answered, that she had no direction but what was in the letter; which she had scratched out, and which, it was probable, was only a temporary one, in order to avoid me: otherwise she would hardly have directed an answer to be left at an inn. And she was of opinion, that to apply to Miss Howe would be the only certain way to succeed in any application for forgiveness, would I enable that young lady to interest herself in procuring it. ✓

Miss Charlotte. Permit me to make a proposal.—Since we are all of one mind in relation to the justice due to Miss Harlowe, if Mr. Lovelace will oblige himself to marry her, I will make Miss Howe a visit, little as I am acquainted with her; and endeavour to engage her interest to forward the desired reconciliation. And if this can be done, I make no question but all may be happily accommodated; for every body knows the love there is between Miss Harlowe and Miss Howe.

This motion was highly approved of; and I gave my honour, as desired, in the fullest manner they could wish.

Lady Sarah. Well then, cousin Charlotte, begin your treaty with Miss Howe, directly.

Lady Betty. Pray do. And let Miss Harlowe be told, that I am ready to receive her as the most welcome of guests: and I will not have her out of my sight till the knot is tied.

Lady Sarah. Tell her from me, that she shall be my daughter!—Instead of my poor Betsey;—and shed a tear in remembrance of her lost daughter.

Lord M. What say you, sir, to this?

Lovel. CONTENT, my lord, I speak in the language of your house.

Thus, at present, by a single hair, hangs over my head the matrimonial sword. And thus ended my trial. And thus are we all friends, and cousin and cousin, and nephew and nephew, at every word.

Miss Howe to Miss Clarissa Harlowe.

Thursday night, July 13.

I AM to acquaint you, that I have been favoured with a visit from Miss Montague and her sister, in Lord M.'s chariot-and-six. My lord's gentleman rode here yesterday, with a request that I would receive a visit from the two young ladies, on a *very particular occasion*; the greater favour if it might be the next day.

As I had so little personal knowledge of either. I doubted not

but it must be in relation to the interests of my dear friend; and so consulting with my mother, I sent them an invitation to favour me (because of the distance) with their company at dinner which they kindly accepted.

I hope, my dear, since things have been so very bad, that their errand to me will be as agreeable to you, as anything that can now happen. They came in the name of Lord M. and Lady Sarah and Lady Betty his two sisters, to desire my interest to engage you to put yourself into the protection of Lady Betty; who will not part with you till she sees all the justice done you that now can be done.

Lady Sarah had not stirred out for a twelve-month before; never since she lost her agreeable daughter whom you and I saw at Mrs. Benson's: but was induced to take this journey by Lady Betty, purely to procure you reparation, if possible. And their joint strength, united with Lord M.'s, has so far succeeded, that the wretch has bound himself to them, and to these young ladies, in the solemnest manner, to wed you in their presence, if they can prevail upon you to give him your hand.

He promises by them to make the best of husbands; and my Lord, and Lady Betty, and Lady Sarah, are all three to be guarantees that he will be so. Noble settlements, noble presents, they talked off: they say they left Lord M. and his two sisters talking of nothing else but of those presents and settlements, how most to do you honour, the greater in proportion for the indignities you have suffered; and of changing of names by Act of Parliament, preparative to the interest they will all join to make to get the titles to go where the bulk of the estate must go, at my lord's death, which they apprehend to be nearer than they wish. Nor doubt they of a thorough reformation in his morals, from your example and influence over him.

Your melancholy letter brought by Rogers, with his account of your indifferent health, confirmed to him by the woman of the house, as well as by your looks, and by your faintness while you talked with him, would have given me inexpressible affliction, had I not been cheered by this agreeable visit from the young ladies. I hope you will be equally so on my imparting the subject of it to you.

Indeed; my dear, you must not hesitate. You *must* oblige them. The alliance is splendid and honourable. Very few will know any thing of his brutal baseness to you. All must end, in a little while, in a general reconciliation; and you will be able to resume your course of doing the good to every deserving object, which procured you blessings wherever you set your foot.

I am concerned to find, that your father's inhuman curse affects you so much as it does. Yet you are a noble creature to

put it, as you put it—I hope you are indeed more solicitous to get it revoked for their sakes than for your own. It is for *them* to be penitent, who hurried you into evils you could not well avoid. You are apt to judge by the unhappy event, rather than upon the true merits of your case. Upon my honour, I think you faultless almost in every step you have taken. What has not that vilely insolent and ambitious, yet stupid, brother of yours to answer for?—That spiteful thing your sister too!

But come, since what has passed cannot be helped, let us look forward. You have now happy prospects opening to you: a family *already noble*, prepared to receive and embrace you with open arms, and joyful hearts, and who by their love to you, will teach another family (who know not what an excellence they have confederated to persecute) how to value you. Your prudence, your piety, will crown all. You will reclaim a wretch, that for an hundred sakes more than for his own one would wish to be reclaimed.

I shall impatiently expect your next letter. The young ladies proposed, that you should put yourself, if in town, or near it, into the Reading stage coach, which inns somewhere in Fleet Street: and if you give notice of the day, you will be met on the road, and that pretty early in your journey, by some of both sexes; one of whom you won't be sorry to see.

Mr. Hickman shall attend you at Slough; and Lady Betty herself, and one of the Miss Montagues, with proper equipages, will be at Reading to receive you; and carry you directly to the seat of the former: for I have expressly stipulated, that the wretch himself shall not come into your presence till your nuptials are to be solemnized, unless you give leave.

Adieu, my dearest friend. Be happy: and hundreds will then be happy of consequence. Inexpressibly so, I am sure will then be

Your ever affectionate

ANNA HOWE.

Miss Howe to Miss Charlotte Montague.

MADAM,

Tuesday morn. July 18.

I TAKE the liberty to write to you, by this special messenger. In the frenzy of my soul I write to you, to demand of you, and of any of your family who can tell news of my beloved friend; who, I doubt, has been spirited away by the base arts of one of the blackest—O help me to a name bad enough to call him by! Her piety is proof against self attempts. It must, it must be he, the only wretch, who could injure such an innocent; and now who knows what he has done with her!

If I have patience, I will give you the occasion of this distracted vehemence.

I wrote to her the very moment you and your sister left me. But being unable to procure a special messenger, as I intended, was forced to send by the post. I urged her [you know I promised that I would : I urged her] with earnestness, to comply with the desires of all your family. Having no answer, I wrote again on Sunday night ; and sent it by a particular hand, who travelled all night ; chiding her for keeping a heart so impatient as mine in such cruel suspense, upon a matter of so much importance to her and therefore to me. And very angry I was with her in my mind.

But, judge my astonishment, my distraction, when last night, the messenger, returning post-haste, brought me word that she had not been heard of since Friday morning ! And that a letter lay for her at her lodgings, which came by the post ; and must be mine !

She went out about six that morning , only intending, as they believe, to go to morning prayers at Covent Garden church, just by her lodgings, as she had done divers times before—went on foot—left word she should be back in an hour—very poorly in health !

Lord, have mercy upon me ! What shall I do !—I was a distracted creature all last night !

Surely, my good ladies, you were well authorized in the proposals you made in presence of my mother ? Surely he dare not abuse your confidence, and the confidence of your noble relations ! I make no apology for giving you this trouble, nor for desiring you to favour with a line, by this messenger,

Your almost distracted

ANNA HOWE.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

M. Hall, Sat. night, July 15.

ALL undone, undone by Jupiter !—Zounds, Jack, what shall I do now ! A curse upon all my plots and contrivances !—But I have it !—In the very heart and soul of me, I have it !

Thou toldest me, that my punishments were but beginning—canst thou, O fatal prognosticator ! canst thou tell me where they will end ?

Thy assistance I bespeak. The moment thou receivest this, I bespeak thy assistance. This messenger rides for life and death—and I hope he'll find you at your town lodgings ; if he meet not with you at Edgware ; where, being Sunday, he will call first.

This cursed, cursed woman, on Friday dispatched man and

horse with the joyful news (as she thought it would be to me) in an exulting letter from Sally Martin, that she had found out my angel as on Wednesday last; and on Friday morning, after she had been at prayers at Covent Garden church—praying for my reformation perhaps—got her arrested by two sheriffs' officers, as she was returning to her lodgings, who (villains!) put her into a chair they had in readiness, and carried her to one of the cursed fellow's houses.

She has arrested her for 150*l.* pretendedly due for board and lodging: a sum, (besides the low villainy of the proceeding) which the dear soul could not possibly raise: all her clothes and effects, except what she had on and with her when she went away, being at the old devil's.

And here, for an aggravation, has the dear creature lain already two days; for I must be gallanting my two aunts and my two cousins, and giving Lord M. an airing after his lying-in—pox upon the whole family of us! And returned not till within this hour; and now returned to my distraction, on receiving the cursed tidings, and the exulting letter.

Hasten, hasten, dear Jack; for the love of God, hasten to the injured charmer! My heart bleeds for her—she deserved not this!—I dare not stir. It will be thought done by my contrivance—and if I am absent from this place, that will confirm the suspicion.

Hasten to her!—Clear me of this cursed job. Most sincerely by all that's sacred, I swear you may!—Yet have I been such a villainous plotter, that the charming sufferer will hardly believe it. although the proceeding be so dirtily low.

Set her free the moment you see her: without conditioning, free!—On your knees, for me, beg her pardon: and assure her, that, wherever she goes, I will not molest her: no, nor come near her without her leave: and be sure allow not any of the damned crew to go near her—only let her permit *you* to receive her commands from time to time—You have always been her friend and advocate. What would I now give, had I permitted you to have been a successful one!

Let her have all her clothes and effects sent her instantly, as a small proof of my sincerity. And force upon the dear creature, who must be moneyless, what sums you can get her to take. Let me know how she has been treated. If roughly woe be to the guilty!

Take thy watch in thy hand, after thou hast freed her, and damn the whole brood, dragon and serpents, by the hour, till thou'rt tired; and tell them I bid thee do so for their cursed officiousness.

They had nothing to do when they had found her, but to wait my orders how to proceed.

The great devil fly away with them all, one by one, through the cursed roof of their own cursed house, and dash them to pieces against the tops of chimnies as he flies; and let the lesser devils collect their scattered scraps, and bag them up, in order to put them together again in their allotted place, in the element of fire, with cements of molten lead.

A line! a line! a kingdom for a line! with tolerable news. the first moment thou canst write!—This fellow waits to bring it

Miss Charlotte Montague to Miss Howe.

M. Hall, Tuesday afternoon.

DEAR MISS HOWE,

YOUR letter has infinitely disturbed us all.

This wretched man has been half distracted ever since Saturday night.

When we returned from you on Thursday night, and made our report of the kind reception both we and our message met with, in that you had been so good as to promise to use your interest with your dear friend; it put us all into such good humour with one another, and with my cousin Lovelace, that we resolved upon a little tour of two days, the Friday and Saturday, in order to give an airing to my Lord, and Lady Sarah; both having been long confined, one by illness, the other by melancholy.

We returned not till Saturday night, all in as good humour with one another as we went out. We never had such pleasure in his company before. If he would be good, and as he ought to be, no man would be better beloved by relations than he. But never was there a greater alteration in a man when he came home, and received a letter from a messenger, who it seems, had been flattering himself in hopes of a reward, and had been waiting for his return from the night before. In *such* a fury!—The man fared but badly. He instantly shut himself up to write, and ordered man and horse to be ready to set out before daylight the next morning, to carry the letter to a friend in London.

He would not see us all that night; neither breakfast nor dine with us next day. He ought, he said, never to see the light; and bid my sister, whom he called an *innocent* (and who was very desirous to know the occasion of all this) shun him; saying, he was a wretch, and made so by his own inventions, and the consequences of them.

None of us could get out of him what so disturbed him. We should too soon hear, he said, to the utter dissipation of all *his* hopes, and of all *ours*.

We could easily suppose, that all was not right with regard to the worthy young lady and him.

He was out each day; and said he wanted to run away from himself.

Late on Monday night he received a letter from Mr. Belford, his most favoured friend, by his own messenger; who came back in a foam, man and horse. Whatever were the contents, he was not easier, but like a madman rather: but still would not let us know the occasion. But to my sister he said, Nobody, my dear Patsey, who can think but of half the plagues that pursue an intriguing spirit would ever quit the fore-right path.

He was out when your messenger came: but soon came in and bad enough was his reception from us all. And he said that his own torments were greater than ours, than Miss Harlowe's or yours, madam, all put together. He would see your letter. He always carries every thing before him: and said, when he had read it, that he thanked God, he was not such a villain, as you with too great an appearance of reason, thought him.

Thus then he owned the matter to be.

He had left general directions to the people of the lodgings the dear lady went from, to find out where she was gone to, if possible, that he might have an opportunity to importune her to be his before their difference was public. The wicked people (*officious* at least, if not wicked) discovered where she was on Wednesday; and, for fear she should remove before they could have his orders they put her under a *gentle restraint*, as they call it; and dispatched away a messenger to acquaint him with it, and to take his orders.

He declares, and we can vouch for him, that he has been, ever since last Saturday night, the most miserable of men.

He forbore going up himself, that it might not be imagined he was guilty of so black a contrivance; and that he went up to complete any base views in consequence of it.

Believe us all, dear Miss Howe, under the deepest concern at this unhappy accident; which will, we fear, exasperate the charming sufferer; not too much for the occasion, but too much for our hopes.

O what wretches are these free-living men, who love to tread in intricate paths; and, when once they err, know not how far out of the way their headstrong course may lead them!

My sister joins her thanks with mine to your good mother and self, for the favours you heaped upon us last Thursday. We beseech your continued interest as to the subject of our visit. It shall be all our studies to oblige and recompense the dear lady

to the utmost of our power, for what she has suffered from the unhappy man.

We are, dear madam,

Your obliged and faithful servants,

CHARLOTTE }
MARTHA } MONTAGUE.

DEAR MISS HOWE,

WE join in the above request of Miss Charlotte and Miss Patty Montague, for your favour and interest; being convinced that the accident was an accident; and no plot or contrivance of a wretch too full of them.

We are madame,

Your most obedient humble servants,

M.

SARAH SADLEIR.

ELIZ. LAWRENCE.

DEAR MISS HOWE,

AFTER what is written above, by names and characters of such unquestionable honour, I might have been excused signing a name almost as hateful to myself, as I KNOW it is to you. But the *above* will have it so. Since therefore I *must* write, it shall be truth; which is, that, if I may be once more admitted to pay my duty to the most deserving and most injured of her sex, I will be content to do it with a halter about my neck; and, attended by a parson on my right hand, and the hangman on my left, be doomed, at her will, either to the church or the gallows.

Your most humble servant,

ROBERT LOVELACE.

Tuesday, July 18.

Mr. Belford to Robert Lovelace, Esq.

Saturday night, July 16.

WHAT a cursed piece of work hast thou made of it, with the most excellent of women. Thou mayest be in earnest, or in jest, as thou wilt. but the poor lady will not be long either thy sport, or the sport of fortune!

I will give thee an account of a scene that wants but her affecting pen to represent it justly; and it would wring all the black blood out of thy callous heart.

Thou only, who art the author of her calamities, shouldst have attended her in her prison: I am unequal to such a task; nor know I any other man but would.

This last act, however unintended by thee, yet a consequence of thy general orders, and too likely to be thought agreeable to thee, by those who know thy other villainies by her, has finished thy barbarous work. And I advise thee to trumpet forth every where, how much in earnest thou art to marry her, whether true or not.

Thou mayest *safely* do it. She will not live to put thee to the trial ; and it will a little palliate for thy enormous usage of her, and be a means to make mankind, who know not what I know of the matter, herd a little longer with thee, and forbear to hunt thee to thy fellow-savages in the Libyan wilds and deserts.

Your messenger found me at Edgware, expecting to dinner with me several friends, whom I had invited three days before. I sent apologies to them, as in a case of life and death ; and speeded to town to the wicked woman's : for how knew I but shocking attempts might be made upon her by the cursed wretches : perhaps by your connivance, in order to mortify her into your measures ?

Finding the lady not there, I hastened away to the officer's, although Sally told me, that she had been just come from thence ; and that she had refused to see her, or, (as she sent down word) any body else ; being resolved to have the remainder of that Sunday to herself, as it might, perhaps, be the last she should ever see.

I had the same thing told me, when I got thither.

I sent up to let her know, that I came with a commission to set her at liberty. I was afraid of sending up the name of a man known to be your friend. She absolutely refused to see *any man* however, for that day, or to answer further to any thing said from me.

Having therefore informed myself of all that the officer, and his wife, and servant, could acquaint me with, as well in relation to the horrid arrest, as to her behaviour, and the woman's to her ; and her ill state of health ; I went back to Sinclair's, as I will still call her, and heard the three women's story. From all which, I am enabled to give you the following shocking particulars : which may serve till I can see the unhappy lady herself to-morrow, if then I gain admittance to her.

Your villain it was that *set* the poor lady, and had the impudence to appear, and abet the sheriff's officers in the cursed transaction. He thought, no doubt, that he was doing the most acceptable service to his blessed master. They had got a chair, the head ready up, as soon as service was over. And as she came out of the church, at the door fronting Bedford Street, the officers, stepping to her, whispered, that they had an action against her.

She was terrified, trembled, and turned pale.

Action! said she. What is that?—I have committed *no bad action!*—Lord bless me! men, what mean you?

That you are our prisoner, madam.

Prisoner, Sirs!—what—how—why—what have I done?

You must go with us. Be pleased, madam, to step into this chair.

With *you!*—with *men!* Must go with *men!*—I am not used to go with *strange men!*—Indeed you must excuse me!

We can't excuse you: we are sheriff's officers. We have a writ against you. You *must* go with us, and you shall know at whose suit.

Suit! said the charming innocent: I don't know what you mean. Pray, men, don't lay hands upon me; (they offering to put her into the chair) I am not used to be thus treated—I have done nothing to deserve it.

She then spied thy villain—O thou wretch, said she, where is thy vile master?—Am I again to be *his prisoner?* Help, good people!

A crowd had before begun to gather.

My master is in the country, madam, many miles off. If you please to go with these men, they will treat you civilly.

The people were most of them struck with compassion. A fine young creature!—A thousand pities, cried some. While some few threw out vile and shocking reflections! But a gentleman interposed, and demanded to see the fellows' authority.

They shewed it. Is your name Clarissa Harlowe, madam? said he.

Yes, yes, indeed, ready to sink, my name *was* Clarissa Harlowe:—but it is now *wretchedness!*—Lord be merciful to me, what is to come next?

You *must* go with these men, madam, said the gentleman they have authority for what they do.

Well, if I must go, I must—I cannot resist—but I will not be carried to the woman's; I will rather die at your feet, than be carried to the woman's.

You won't be carried there, madam, cried thy fellow.

Only to my house, madam, said one of the officers.

Where is that?—In High Holborn, madam.

I know not where High Holborn is; but any where, except to the woman's.—But am I to go with *men* only?

Looking about her, and seeing the three passages, to wit, that leading to Henrietta Street, that to King Street, and the fore-right one, to Bedford Street, crowded, she started—any where—any where, said she, but to the woman's! and stepping into the chair, threw herself on the seat, in the utmost distress and confusion—

carry me, carry me out of sight—cover me—cover me up—for ever—were her words.

Thy villain drew the curtain: she had not power: and they went away with her through a vast crowd of people.

Here I must rest. I can write no more at present.

Only, Lovelace, remember, *all this was to a Clarissa!*

* * * *

The unhappy lady fainted away when she was taken out of the chair at the officer's house.

Several people followed the chair to the very house, which is in a wretched court. Sally was there; and satisfied some of the inquirers, that the young gentlewoman would be exceedingly well used: and they soon dispersed.

Dorcas was also there; but came not in her sight, Sally, as a favour, offered to carry her to her former lodgings: but she declared they should carry her thither a corpse, if they did.

She asked, what was meant by this usage of her? People told me, said she, that I *must* go with the men:—that they had authority to take me. so I submitted. But now, what is to be the end of this disgraceful violence?

The end, said the vile Sally Martin, is, for honest people to come at their own.

Bless me! have I taken away any thing that belongs to those who have obtained this power over me?—I have left very valuable things behind me: but have taken nothing away that is not my own.

And who do you think, *Miss Harlowe*; for I understand, said the cursed creature, you are not married; who do you think is to pay for your board and your lodgings? such handsome lodgings! for so long a time as yours were at Mrs. Sinclair's.

Lord have mercy upon me!—Miss Martin! (I think you are Miss Martin)—And is this the cause of such a disgraceful insult upon me in the open streets?

And cause enough, *Miss Harlowe* (fond of gratifying her jealous revenge, by calling her *Miss*)—one hundred and fifty guineas, or pounds, is no small sum to lose—and by a young creature who would have bilked her lodgings.

You amaze me, Miss Martin!—What language do you talk in?—*Bilk my lodgings!*—What is that?

She stood astonished, and silent for a few moments.

But recovering herself, and turning from her to the window, she wrung her hands, [the cursed Sally shewed me how!] and lifting them up —*Now*, Lovelace: now indeed do I think I *ought* to forgive thee!—But who shall forgive *Clarissa Harlowe!*—O my sister!—O my brother!—Tender mercies were your cruelties to *this!*

* * * *

About six in the evening, Rowland's wife pressed her to drink tea. She said, she had rather have a glass of water; for her tongue was ready to cleave to the roof of her mouth.

The woman brought her a glass, and some bread and butter. She tried to taste the latter: but could not swallow it: but eagerly drank the water; lifting up her eyes in thankfulness for that!!!

The divine Clarissa, Lovelace—reduced to rejoice for a cup of cold water—By whom reduced!

About nine o'clock she asked if any body were to be her bed-fellow.

Their maid, if she pleased; or, as she was so weak and ill, the girl should sit up with her, if she chose she should.

She chose to be alone both night and day, she said. But might she not be trusted with the keys of the room where she was to lie down; for she should not put off her clothes!

That, they told her, could not be.

She was afraid not, she said.—But indeed she would not get away, if she could.

They told me, that they had but one bed, besides that they lay in themselves, (which they would fain have had her accept of) and besides *that* their maid lay in, in a garret, which they called a hole of a garret: and that *that* one bed was the prisoner's bed; which they made several apologies to me about. I suppose it is shocking enough.

But the lady would not lie in theirs. Was she not a prisoner? she said—let her have the prisoner's room.

Yet they owned that she started when she was conducted thither. But recovering herself, Very well, said she—why should not all be of a piece?—why should not my wretchedness be complete?

She found fault, that all the fastenings were on the outside, and none within; and said, she could not trust herself in a room, where others could come in at their pleasure, and she not go out. She had not *been used* to it!!!

Dear, dear soul!—My tears flow as I write!—Indeed, Lovelace, she had not been used to such treatment.

* * * *

Next morning Sally and Polly both went to visit her.

She had begged of Sally the day before, that she might not see Mrs. Sinclair, nor Dorcas, nor the broken-toothed servant, called William.

Mrs. Sinclair shall attend you by-and-by to know if you have any commands for her?

I have no wish for any liberty, but that of refusing to see her and *one* more person.

What we came for, was to know if you had any proposals to make for your enlargement.

Then, it seems, the officer put in, You have very good friends, madam, I understand. Is it not better that you make it up? Charges will run high. A hundred and fifty guineas are easier paid than two hundred. Let these ladies bail you, and go along with them; or write to your friends to make it up.

Sally said, there is a gentleman who saw you taken, and was so much moved for you, *Miss Harlowe*, that he would gladly advance the money for you, and leave you to pay it when you can.

See, Lovelace, what cursed devils these are. This is the way, we know, that many an innocent heart is thrown upon keeping, and then upon the town. But for these wretches thus to go to work with such an angel as this!—How glad would have been the devilish Sally, to have had the least handle to report to thee a listening ear, or patient spirit, upon this hint?

Sir, said she, with high indignation, to the officer, did not you say last night, that it was as much your business to protect me from the insults of others, as from escaping?—Cannot I be permitted to see whom I please, and to refuse admittance to those I like not?

Your creditors, madam, will expect to see you.

Not if I declare I will not treat with them.

Then, madam, you will be sent to prison.

Prison, friend!—What dost thou call thy house?

Not a prison, madam.

Why these iron-barred windows, then? Why these double locks and bolts all on the outside, none on the in?

And down she dropt into her chair, and they could not get another word from her. She drew her handkerchief over her face, as once before, which was soon wet with tears; and grievously they own, she sobbed.

She besought them to leave her. She wanted not these instances, she said, to convince her of the company she was in; and told them, that, to get rid of such visitors, and of the still worse she was apprehensive of, she would write to one friend to raise the money for her, though it would be death for her to do so; because that friend could not do it without her mother, in whose eye it would give a selfish appearance to a friendship that was above all sordid alloys.

They advised her to write out of hand.

But how much must I write for? What is the sum? Should I not have had a bill delivered me? God knows, I took

not your lodgings. But he that could treat me as he has done, could do this !

Don't speak against Mr. Lovelace, *Miss Harlowe*. He is a man I greatly esteem [cursed toad !] And 'bating that he will take his advantage, where he can, of *us* silly credulous women, he is a man of honour.

She lifted up her hands and eyes, instead of speaking : and well she might ! For any words she could have used, could not have expressed the anguish she must feel, on being comprehended in the US.

She must write for one hundred and fifty guineas, at least : two hundred, if she were short of money, might as well be written for.

Mrs. Sinclair, she said, had all her clothes. Let them be sold, *fairly* sold, and the money go as far as it would go. She had also a few other valuables ; but no money (none at all) but the poor half guinea, and the little silver they had seen. She would give bond to pay all that her apparel, and the other matters she had, would fall short of. She had great effects belonging to her of right. Her bond would, and must, be paid, were it for a thousand pounds. But her clothes she should never want. She believed, if not too much undervalued, those and her few valuables, would answer every thing. She wished for no surplus but to discharge the last expenses : and forty shillings would do as well for those as forty pounds. " Let my ruin, said she, lifting up her eyes, be **LARGE** ! Let it be **COMPLETE**, *in this life* !—For a *composition*, let it be **COMPLETE**."—And there she stopped.*

Will not Mrs. Sinclair, proceeded she, think my clothes a security, till they can be sold ? They are very good clothes. A suit or two but just put on, as it were ; never worn. They cost much more than is demanded of me. *My father loved to see me fine*—all shall go. But let me have the particulars of her demand. I suppose I must pay for my *destroyer* [that was her well adapted word ;] and his servants, as well as for myself—I am content to do so—Indeed I am content to do so—I am above wishing, that any body, who could *thus* act, should be so much as expostulated with, as to the justice and equity of this payment. If I have but enough to pay the demand, I shall be satisfied ; and will leave the baseness of such an action as this, as an aggravation of a guilt which I thought could *not* be aggravated.

I own, Lovelace, I have malice in this particularity, in order to sting thee to the heart. And, let me ask thee, what now canst thou think of thy barbarity, thy unprecedented barbarity, in having reduced a person of her rank, fortune, talents, and virtue, so low ?

The wretched women, it must be owned, act but in their pro-

* No doubt alluding to her father's extensive curse.

fession ; a profession thou hast been the principal means of reducing these two to act in. And they know what thy designs have been, and how far prosecuted.

Till I came, they thought thou wouldst not be displeased at any thing she suffered, that could help to mortify her into a state of shame and disgrace ; and bring her to comply with thy views, when thou shouldst come to release her from these wretches, as from a greater evil than cohabiting with thee.

When thou considerest these things, thou wilt make no difficulty of believing, that this their own account of their behaviour to this admirable woman has been far short of their insults : and the less, when I tell thee, that, altogether, their usage had such effects upon her, that they left her in violent hysterics ; ordering an apothecary to be sent for, if she should continue in them, and be worse ; and particularly (as they had done from the first) that they kept out of her way any edged or pointed instrument ; especially a pen-knife ; which, pretending to mend a pen, they said, she might ask for.

At twelve Saturday night, Rowland sent to tell them, that she was so ill, that he knew not what might be the issue ; and wished her out of his house.

And this made them as heartily wish to hear from you. For their messenger, to their great surprise, was not then returned from M. Hall. And they were sure he must have reached that place by Friday night.

Early on Sunday morning, both devils went to see how she did. They had such an account of her weakness, lowness, and anguish, that they forbore, (out of compassion, they said, finding their visits so disagreeable to her) to see her. But their apprehension of what might be the issue was, no doubt, their principal consideration : nothing else could have softened such flinty bosoms.

They sent for the apothecary Rowland had had to her, and gave him, and Rowland, and his wife and maid, strict orders many times repeated, for the utmost care to be taken of her—no doubt, with an Old Bailey forecast. And they sent up to let her know what orders they had given : but that, understanding she had taken something to compose her, they would not disturb her.

When I first came, and told them of thy execrations for what they had done, and joined my own to them, they were astonished. The mother said, she had thought she had known Mr. Lovelace better ; and expected thanks, and not curses.

While I was with them, came back halting and cursing, most horribly, their messenger ; by reason of the ill usage he had received from you, instead of the reward he had been taught to expect for the supposed good news that he carried down—a pretty fellow art thou not, to abuse people for the consequences of thy own faults ?

Under what shocking disadvantages, and with this addition to them, that I am thy friend and intimate, am I to make a visit to this unhappy lady to-morrow morning! In thy *name*, too!—Enough to be refused, that I am of a *sex*, to which, for *thy* sake, she has so justifiable an aversion: nor, having such a tyrant of a father, and such an implacable brother, has she reason to make an exception in favour of *any* of it on *their* accounts.

It is three o'clock. I will close here; and take a little rest. what I have written will be a proper preparative for what shall offer by and by.

Thy servant is not to return without a letter, he tells me; and that thou expectest him back in the morning. Thou hast fellows enough, where thou art, at thy command. If I find any difficulty in seeing the lady, thy messenger shall post away with this.—Let him look to broken bones, and other consequences, if what he carries answer not thy expectation. But, if I am admitted, thou shalt have *this* and the result of my audience both together. In the former case thou mayest send another servant to wait the next advices, from

J. BELFORD.

Mr. Belford to Robert Lovelace, Esq.

Monday, July 17.

ABOUT six this morning I went to Rowland's. Mrs. Sinclair was to follow me, in order to dismiss the action; but not to come in sight.

Rowland, upon inquiry, told me that the lady was extremely ill; and that she had desired, that no one but his wife or maid should come near her.

I said, I *must* see her. I had told him my business over night, and I *must* see her.

His wife went up: but returned presently, saying, she could not get her to speak to her; yet that her eyelids moved; though she either would not, or could not open them, to look up at her.

Oons, woman, said I, the lady may be in a fit: the lady may be dying—let me go up. Shew me the way.

A horrid hole of a house, in an alley they call a court; stairs wretchedly narrow, even to the first floor rooms; and into a den they led me, with broken walls, which had been papered, as I saw by a multitude of tacks, and some torn bits held on by the rusty heads.

The floor indeed was clean, but the ceiling was smoked with variety of figures, and initials of names, that had been the woeful

employment of wretches who had no other way to amuse themselves.

A bed at one corner, with coarse curtains tacked up at the feet to the ceiling; because the curtain-rings were broken off; but a coverlid upon it with a cleanish look, though plaguily in tatters, and the corners tied up in tassels, that the rents in it might go no further.

The windows dark and double-barred, the tops boarded up to save mending; and only a little four-paned eyelet-hole of a casement to let in the air; more, however, coming in at broken panes, than could come in at that.

For old Turkey-worked chairs, bursten-bottomed, the stuffing staring out.

An old, tottering, worm-eaten table, that had more nails bestowed in mending it to make it stand, than the table cost fifty years ago, when new.

To finish the shocking description, in a dark nook stood an old broken-bottomed cane couch, without a squab, or coverlid, sunk at one corner, and unmortised by the failing of one of its worm-eaten legs, which lay in two pieces under the wretched piece of furniture it could no longer support.

And this, thou horrid Lovelace, was the bedchamber of the divine Clarissa!!!

I had leisure to cast my eye on these things: for, going up softly, the poor lady turned not about at our entrance; nor till I spoke, moved her head.

She was kneeling in a corner of the room, near the dismal window, against the table, on an old bolster (as it seemed to be) of the cane couch, half-covered with her handkerchief; her back to the door; which was only shut to, [no need of fastenings!] her arms crossed upon the table. the fore-finger of her right hand in her Bible. She had perhaps been reading in it, and could read no longer. Paper, pens, ink, lay by her book on the table.

When I surveyed the room around, and the kneeling lady, sunk with majesty too in her white flowing robes, (for she had not on a hoop) spreading the dark, though not dirty, floor, and illuminating that horrid corner; her linen beyond imagination white, considering that she had not been undressed ever since she had been here; I thought my concern would have choaked me. Something rose in my throat, I know not what, which made me, for a moment, guggle, as it were, for speech! Which, at last, forcing its way, Con—Con—confound you both, said I, to the man and woman, is this an apartment for such a lady? And could the cursed devils of her own sex, who visited this suffering angel, see her, and leave her, in so d—n'd a nook?

Sir, we would have had the lady to accept of our own bed-

chamber: but she refused it. We are poor people—and we expect nobody will stay with us longer than they can help it.

You are people chosen purposely, I doubt not, by the d—n'd woman who has employed you: and if your usage of this lady has been but half as bad as your house, you had better never to have seen the light.

Up then raised the charming sufferer her lovely face; but with such a significance of woe overspreading it, that I could not, for the soul of me, help being visibly affected.

She waved her hand two or three times towards the door, as if commanding me to withdraw; and displeased at my intrusion; but did not speak.

Permit me, madam—I will not approach one step further without your leave—permit me, for one moment, the favour of your ear!

No—no—Go, go; MAN, with an emphasis—and would have said more; but, as if struggling in vain for words, she seemed to give up speech for lost, and dropped her head down once more, with a deep sigh, upon her left arm! her right, as if she had not the use of it, (numbed I suppose) self-moved, dropping down on her side.

I dare not approach you, dearest lady, without your leave: but on my knees I beseech you to permit me to release you from this d—n'd house, and out of the power of the accursed woman, who was the occasion of your being here!

She lifted up her sweet face once more, and beheld me on my knees. Never knew I before what it was to pray so heartily.

Are you not—are you not Mr. Belford, sir? I think your name is Belford?

It is, madam, and I ever was a worshipper of your virtues, and an advocate for you; and I come to release you from the hands you are in.

And in whose to place me?—O leave me, leave me! Let me never rise from this spot! Let me never more believe in man!

This moment, dearest lady, this very moment, if you please, you may depart whithersoever you think fit. You are absolutely free, and your own mistress.

I had now as lieve die here in this place, as any where. I will owe no obligation to any friend of *him* in whose company you have seen me. So, pray, sir, withdraw.

Then turning to the officer, Mr. Rowland I think your name is? I am better reconciled to your house than I was at first. If you can but engage that I shall have nobody come near me but your wife, (no *man*!) and neither of those women who have sported with my calamities; I will die with you, and in this very corner. And you shall be well satisfied for the trouble you have had with

me.—I have value enough for that—for, see, I have a diamond ring; taking it out of her bosom; and I have friends will redeem it at a high price, when I am gone.

But for *you*, sir, looking at me, I beg you to withdraw. If you mean me well, God, I hope, will reward you for your good meaning; but to the friend of my *destroyer* will I not owe an obligation.

You will owe no obligation to me, nor to any body. You have been detained for a debt you do not owe. The action is dismissed; and you will only be so good as to give me your hand into the coach, which stands as near to this house as it could draw up; and I will either leave you at the coach-door, or attend you whithersoever you please, till I see you safe where you would wish to be.

Will you then, sir, *compel* me to be beholden to you?

You will inexpressibly oblige me, madam, to command me to do you either service or pleasure.

Why then, sir, [looking at me]—but why do you mock me in that humble posture! Rise, sir, I cannot speak to you else.

I arose.

Only sir, take this ring. I have a sister, who will be glad to have it at the price it shall be valued at, for the *former* owner's sake!—Out of the money she gives, let this man be paid, handsomely paid: and I have a few valuables more at my lodging, (Dorcas, or the MAN William, can tell where that is;) let them, and my clothes at the wicked woman's where you have seen me, be sold for the payment of my lodging first, and next of your *friend's* debts, that I have been arrested for, as far as they will go; only reserving enough to put me into the ground, any where, or any how, no matter—tell your friend, I wish it may be enough to satisfy the whole demand; but if it be not, he must make it up himself; or, if he think fit to draw for it on Miss Howe, she will repay it, *and with interest*, if he insist upon it.—And this, sir, if you promise to perform, you will do me, as you offer, both pleasure and service; and say you *will* and take the ring, and withdraw. If I want to say any thing more to you (you seem to be an humane man) I will let you know—and so, sir, God bless you.

I approached her, and was going to speak—

Don't speak, sir: here's the ring.

I stood off.

And won't you take it? Won't you do this last office for me?—I have no other person to ask it of; else, believe me, I would not request it of *you*. But take it, or not, laying it upon the table—*you* must withdraw, sir: I am very ill. I would fain get a little rest, if I could. I find I am going to be bad again.

And offering to rise, she sunk down through excess of weakness and grief, in a fainting fit.

Why, Lovelace, wast thou not present thyself?—Why dost

thou commit such villainies as even thou art afraid to appear in and yet puttest a weaker heart and head upon encountering with them?

The maid coming in just then, the woman and she lifted her upon the decrepit couch; and I withdrew with this Rowland; who wept like a child, and said, he never in his life was so moved.

They recovered her by hartshorn and water. I went down meanwhile; for the detestable woman had been below some time. O how did I curse her! I never before was so fluent in curses.

I sent up again, by Rowland's wife, when I heard that the lady was recovered, beseeching her to quit that devilish place; and the woman assured her, that she was at full liberty to do so; for that the action was dismissed.

But she cared not to answer her: and was so weak and low, that it was almost as much out of her power as inclination, the woman told me, to speak.

I would have hastened away for my friend Doctor H. but the house is such a den, and the room she was in such a hole, that I was ashamed to be seen in it by a man of his reputation, especially with a woman of such an appearance, and in such uncommon distress; and I found there was no prevailing on her to quit it for the people's bed-room, which was neat and lightsome.

The strong room she was in, the wretches told me, should have been in better order, but that it was but the very morning that she was brought in, that an unhappy man had quitted it; for a more eligible prison, no doubt; since there could hardly be a worse.

Being told, that she desired not to be disturbed, and seemed inclined to doze, I took this opportunity to go to her lodgings in Covent Garden: to which Dorcas had before given me a direction.

The man's name is Smith, a dealer in gloves, snuff, and such petty merchandise: his wife the shopkeeper: he a maker of the gloves they sell. Honest people, it seems.

I thought to have got the woman with me to the lady; but she was not within.

I talked with the man, and told him what had befallen the lady; owing, as I said, to a mistake of orders; and gave her the character she deserved; and desired him to send his wife the moment she came in, to the lady; directing him whither; not doubting, that her attendance would be very welcome to her; which he promised.

He told me, that a letter was left for her there on Saturday, and, about half an hour before I came, another, superscribed by

the same hand ; the first, by the post ; the other, by a country-man ; who having been informed of her absence, and of all the circumstances they could tell him of it, posted away, full of concern, saying, that the lady he was sent from would be ready to break her heart at the tidings.

I thought it right to take the two letters back with me ; and dismissing my coach, took a chair, as a more proper vehicle for the lady, if I (the friend of her *destroyer*) could prevail upon her to leave Rowland's.

And here, being obliged to give way to an indispensable avocation, I will make thee taste a little, in thy turn, of the plague of suspense ; and break off, without giving thee the least hint of the issue of my further proceedings. I know, that those least bear disappointment, who love most to give it. In twenty instances, hast thou afforded me proof of the truth of this observation. And I matter not thy raving.

Another letter, however, shall be ready ; send for it as soon as thou wilt. But, were it not, have I not written enough to convince thee, that I am

Thy ready and obliging friend,
J. BELFORD.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

Monday, July 17, eleven at night.

CURSE upon thy hard heart, thou vile caitiff ! How hast thou tortured me, by thy designed *abruption* ! 'Tis impossible that Miss Harlowe should have ever suffered as thou hast made me suffer, and as I now suffer !

That sex is made to bear pain. It is a curse, that the first of it entailed upon all her daughters, when she brought the curse upon us all. And they love those best, whether man or child, who give them most—but to stretch upon thy d—'d tenter-hooks such a spirit as mine—no rack, no torture, can equal my torture !

And must I still wait the return of another messenger ? Confound thee for a malicious devil ; I wish thou wert a post-horse, and I upon the back of thee ! How would I whip and spur, and harrow up thy clumsy sides, till I made thee a ready-roasted, ready-flayed, mess of dog's meat ; all the hounds in the country howling after thee, as I drove thee, to wait my dismounting, in order to devour thee piecemeal ; life still throbbing in each churned mouthful !

Give this fellow the sequel of thy tormenting scribble.

Dispatch him away with it. Thou hast promised it shall be

ready. Every cushion or chair I shall sit upon, the bed I shall lie down upon (if I go to bed) till he return, will be stuffed with bolt-upright awls, bodkins, corking-pins, and packing needles: already I can fancy, that to pink my body like my mind, I need only to be put into a hogshead stuck full of steel, pointed spikes, and rolled down a hill three times as high as the Monument.

But I lose time; yet know not how to employ it till this fellow returns with the sequel of thy soul-harrowing intelligence.

Mr. Belford to Robert Lovelace, Esq.

Monday night, July 17.

ON my return to Rowland's, I found that the apothecary was just gone up. Mrs. Rowland being above with him, I made the less scruple to go up too, as it was probable, that to ask for leave would be to ask to be denied; hoping also, that the letters I had with me would be a good excuse.

She was sitting on the side of the broken couch, extremely weak and low; and, I observed, cared not to speak to the man: and no wonder, for I never saw a more shocking fellow, of a profession tolerably genteel, nor heard a more illiterate one prate—physician in ordinary to this house, and others like it, I suppose! He put me in mind of Otway's apothecary in his *Caius Marius*; as borrowed from immortal Shakspeare:

Meagre and very rueful were his looks:
Sharp misery had worn him to the bones.
——famine in his cheeks:
Need and oppression staring in his eyes:
Contempt and beggary hanging on his back:
The world no friend of his, nor the world's law.

As I am in black, he took me, at my entrance, I believe, to be a doctor; and slunk behind me with his hat upon his two thumbs, and looked as if he expected the oracle to open, and give him orders.

The lady looked displeased, as well at me as at Rowland, who followed me, and at the apothecary. It was not, she said, the least of her present misfortunes, that she could not be left to her own sex; and to her option to see whom she pleased.

I besought her excuse: and winking for the apothecary to withdraw, [which he did] told her, that I had been at her new lodgings, to order every thing to be got ready for her reception, presuming she would choose to go thither: that I had a chair at the door: that Mr. Smith and his wife [I named their names, that she should not have room for the least fear of Sinclair's] had been

full of apprehensions for her safety that I had brought two letters, which were left there for her; the one by the post, the other that very morning.

This took her attention, she held out her charming hand for them; took them, and, pressing them to her lips—From the only friend I have in the world! said she, kissing them again; and looking at the seals, as if to see whether they had been opened. I can't read them, said she, my eyes are too dim; and put them into her bosom.

I besought her to think of quitting that wretched hole.

Whither could she go, she asked, to be safe and uninterrupted for the short remainder of her life; and to avoid being again visited by the creatures who had insulted her before?

I gave her the most solemn assurances, that she should not be invaded in her new lodgings by anybody; and said, that I would particularly engage my honour, that *the person who had most offended her, should not come near her, without her own consent.*

Your honour, sir! Are you not that man's friend!

I am not a friend, madam, to his vile actions to the *most excellent of women.*

Do you flatter me, sir? Then are you a MAN.—But oh, sir, your friend, holding her face forward with great eagerness, your *barbarous* friend, what has he not to answer for!

There she stopt: her heart full; and putting her hand over her eyes and forehead, the tears trickled through her fingers resenting thy barbarity, it seemed, as Cæsar did the stab from his distinguished Brutus!

I repented to her, that she would be less free where she was from visits she liked not, than at her own lodgings. I told her that it would probably bring her, in particular, *one visitor*, who otherwise I would engage should not come near her, without her consent. And I expressed my surprise, that she should be unwilling to quit such a place as this; when it would be more than probable, that some of her friends, when it was known how bad she was would visit her.

She said, the place when she was first brought into it, was indeed very shocking to her: but that she had found herself so weak and ill, and her griefs had so sunk her, that she did not expect to have lived till now: that therefore all places were alike to her: for to die in a prison, *was* to die, and equally eligible as to die in a palace [palaces, she said, could have no attractions for a dying person:] but, that since she feared she was not so soon to be released as she had hoped; since she was suffered to be so little mistress of herself *here*; and since she might, by removal, be in the way of her dear friend's letters; she would hope, that

she might depend upon the assurances I gave her, of being at full liberty to return to her last lodgings (otherwise she would provide herself with new ones, out of my knowledge as well as out of yours;) and that I was too much of a gentleman, to be concerned in carrying her back to the house she had so much reason to abhor: and to which she had been once before most vilely betrayed to her ruin.

I assured her in the strongest terms that you were resolved not to molest her; and, as a proof of the sincerity of my professions, besought her to give me directions (in pursuance of my friend's express desire) about sending all her apparel, and whatever belonged to her, to her new lodgings.

She seemed pleased; and gave me instantly out of her pocket her keys; asking me, if Mrs. Smith, whom I had named, might not attend me: and she would give *her* further directions: to which I cheerfully assented: and then she told me that she would accept the chair I had offered her.

I withdrew; and took the opportunity to be civil to Rowland and his maid; for she found no fault with their behaviour, for what they *were*; and the fellow seems to be miserably poor. I sent also for the apothecary, who is as poor as the officer (and still poorer, I daresay, as to the skill required in his business;) and satisfied him beyond his hopes.

The lady, after I had withdrawn, attempted to read the letters I had brought her. But she could read but a little way in one of them, and had great emotions upon it.

She told the woman she would take a speedy opportunity to acknowledge her civilities and her husband's, and to satisfy the apothecary; who might send her his bill to her lodgings.

She gave the maid something; probably the only half-guinea she had: and then with difficulty, her limbs trembling under her, and supported by Mrs. Rowland, got down stairs.

I offered my arm; she was pleased to lean upon it. I doubt sir, said she, as she moved, I have behaved rudely to you: but if you knew all, you would forgive me.

I know enough, madam, to convince me, that there is not such purity and honour in any woman upon earth; nor any one that has been so barbarously treated.

She looked at me very earnestly. What she thought I cannot say; but, in general, I never saw so much soul in a woman's eyes as in hers.

I ordered my servant (whose mourning made him less observable as such, and who had not been in the lady's eye) to keep the chair in view; and to bring me word how she did when set down. The fellow had the thought to step into the shop, just before the chair entered it, under the pretence of buying snuff; and so ena-

bled himself to give me an account, that she was received with great joy by the good woman of the house; who told her, she was but just come in: and was preparing to attend her in High Holborn.—O Mrs. Smith, said she, as soon as she saw her, did you not think I was run away?—You don't know what I have suffered since I saw you. I have been in a prison!—Arrested for debts I owe not!—But, thank God, I am here!—Will you permit your maid—I have forgot her name already—

Catharine, madam—

Will you let Catharine assist me to bed?—I have not had my clothes off since Thursday night.

What she further said, the fellow heard not, she leaning upon the maid, and going up stairs.

I was resolved to lose no time in having every thing which belonged to the lady at the cursed woman's sent her. Accordingly, I took coach to Smith's, and procured the lady, (to whom I sent up my compliments, and inquiries how she bore her removal) ill as she sent me down word she was, to give proper directions to Mrs. Smith: whom I took with me to Sinclair's: and who saw every thing looked out, and put into the trunks and boxes they were first brought in: and carried away in two coaches.

Had I not been there, Sally and Polly would each of them have taken to herself something of the poor lady's spoils. This they declared: and I had some difficulty to get from Sally a fine Brussels-lace head, which she had the confidence to say she would wear for *Miss Harlowe's* sake. Nor should either I or Mrs Smith have known she had got it, had she not been in search after the ruffles belonging to it.

Mr. Belford to Robert Lovelace, Esq.

Tuesday morn. (July 18) 6 o'clock.

HAVING sat up late to finish and seal in readiness my letter to the above period, I am disturbed before I wished to have risen, by the arrival of thy second fellow, man and horse in a foam.

While he baits, I will write a few lines, most heartily to congratulate thee on thy *expected* rage and impatience, and on thy recovery of *mental* feeling.

Only let me repeat one thing, which perhaps I mentioned too slightly before. That the lady was determined to remove to new lodgings, where neither you nor I should be able to find her, had I not solemnly assured her, that she might depend upon being free from your visit.

These assurances I thought I might give her, not only because

of your promise, but because it is necessary for you to know where she is, in order to address yourself to her by your friends.

Enable me therefore to make good to her this my solemn engagement ; or adieu to all friendship, at least to all correspondence, with thee for ever.

J. BELFORD.

Mr. Belford to Robert Lovelace, Esq.

Tuesday, July 18, afternoon.

I RENEWED my inquiries after the lady's health, in the morning, by my servant : and as soon as I had dined, I went myself.

I had but a poor account of it : yet sent up my compliments. She returned me thanks for all my good offices ; and her excuses, that they could not be *personal* just then, being very low and faint : but if I gave myself the trouble of coming about six this evening, she should be able, she hoped, to drink a dish of tea with me, and would then thank me herself.

I am very proud of this condescension ; and think it looks not amiss for you, as I am your avowed friend. Methinks I want fully to remove from her mind all doubts of you in this last villainous action : and who knows then what your noble relations may be able to do for you with her, if you hold your mind ? For your servant acquainted me with their having actually engaged Miss Howe in their and your favour, before this cursed affair happened. And I desire the particulars of all from yourself, that I may the better know how to serve you.

She has two handsome apartments, a bedchamber and dining room, with light closets in each. She has already a nurse (the people of the house having but one maid) ; a woman whose care, diligence, and honesty, Mrs. Smith highly commends. She has likewise the benefit of the voluntary attendance, and *love*, as it seems, of a widow gentlewoman, Mrs. Lovick her name, who lodges over her apartment, and of whom she seems very fond, having found something in her, she thinks, resembling the qualities of her worthy Mrs. Norton.

About seven o'clock this morning, it seems, the lady was so ill, that she yielded to their desires, to have an apothecary sent for—not the fellow, thou mayest believe, she had had before at Rowlands : but one Mr. Goddard, a man of skill and eminence ; and of conscience too ; demonstrated as well by general character, as by his prescriptions to this lady : for pronouncing her case to be grief, he ordered, for the present, only innocent juleps by way of cordial ; and, as soon as her stomach should be able to bear it, light kitchen-diet ; telling Mrs. Lovick that that, with air

moderate exercise, and cheerful company, would do her more good than all the medicines in his shop.

This has given me, as it seems it has the lady, (who also praises his modest behaviour, paternal looks, and genteel address) a very good opinion of the man; and I design to make myself acquainted with him, and, if he advises to call in a doctor, to wish him, for the fair patient's sake, more than the physician's, (who wants not practice) my worthy friend Dr. H.—whose character is above all exception, as his humanity, I am sure, will distinguish him to the lady.

Tuesday night.

I AM just come from the lady. I was admitted into the dining-room, where she was sitting in an elbow-chair, in a very weak and low way. She made an effort to stand up, when I entered; but was forced to keep her seat. You'll excuse me, Mr. Belford: I ought to rise to thank you for all your kindness to me. I was to blame to be so loth to leave that sad place: for I am in heaven here, to what I was there; and good people about me, too!—I have not had good people about me for a long, long time before; so that [with a half-smile] I had begun to wonder whither they were all gone.

Her nurse and Mrs. Smith, who were present, took occasion to retire: and, when we were alone, You seem to be a person of humanity, sir, said she: you hinted, as I was leaving *my prison*, that you were not a stranger to my sad story. If you know it *truly*, you must know that I have been most barbarously treated: and have not deserved it at the man's hands by whom I have suffered.

I told her, I knew enough to be convinced, that she had the merit of a saint, and the purity of an angel: and was proceeding, when she said, No flighty compliments! No undue attributes, sir!

I disclaimed all intentions of compliment: all I *had* said, and what I *should* say, was, and should be, the effect of sincere veneration. My unhappy friend's account of her had entitled her to that.

I then mentioned your grief: your penitence, your resolutions of making her all the amends that were possible now to be made her, and in the most earnest manner, I asserted your innocence as to the last villainous outrage.

Her answer was to this effect—It is painful to me to think of him. The amends you talk of, cannot be made. This last violence you speak of, *is nothing to what preceded it*. That cannot be atoned for: nor palliated: this *may*: and I shall not be sorry to be convinced, that he cannot be guilty of so very low a wickedness.—Yet, after his vile forgeries of hands—after his baseness in im-

posing upon me the most infamous persons as ladies of honour of his own family—what are the iniquities he is not capable of?

I would then have given her an account of the trial you stood with your friends: your own previous resolutions of marriage, had she honoured you with the requested *four words*: all your family's earnestness to have the honour of her alliance: and the application of your two cousins to Miss Howe, by general consent, for that young lady's interest with her: but, having just touched upon these topics, she cut me short, saying, that was a cause before another tribunal: Miss Howe's letters to her were upon that subject; and she would write her thoughts to *her* as soon as she was able.

It is my opinion (if thou holdest thy purposes to marry) that thou canst not do better, than to procure thy *real* aunts, and thy *real* cousins, to pay her a visit, and to be thy advocates: but, if they decline personal visits, letters from them, and from my Lord M. supported by Miss Howe's interest, may, perhaps, effect something in thy favour.

But these are only my hopes, founded on what I *wish* for thy sake. The lady, I really think, would choose death rather than thee: and the two women are of opinion, though they know not half of what she has suffered, that her heart is actually broken.

At taking my leave, I tendered my best services to her, and besought her to permit me frequently to inquire after her health. She made me no answer, but by bowing her head.

Mr. Belford to Robert Lovelace, Esq.

Wednesday, July 19.

THIS morning I took chair to Smith's; and, being told that the lady had a very bad night, but was up, I sent for her worthy apothecary; who, on his coming to me, approving of my proposal of calling in Dr. H.; I bid the women acquaint her with the designed visit.

It seems, she was at first displeased; yet withdrew her objection: but, after a pause, asked them, what she should do? She had effects of value, some of which she intended, as soon as she *could*, to turn into money, but, till then, had not a single guinea to give the doctor for his fee.

Mrs. Lovick said, she had five guineas by her; they were at her service.

She would accept of three, she said, if she would take *that* (pulling a diamond ring from her finger) till she repaid her; but on no other terms.

Having been told I was below with Mr. Goddard she desired to speak one word with me, before she saw the doctor.

She was sitting in an elbowchair, leaning her head on a pillow Mrs. Smith and the widow on each side her chair ; her nurse, with a phial of hartshorn, behind her ; in her own hand, her salts.

Raising her head at my entrance, she inquired, if the doctor knew Mr. Lovelace.

I told her, no ; and that I believed you never saw him in your life.

Was the doctor my friend ?

He was ; and a very worthy and skilful man. I named him for his eminence in his profession : and Mr. Goddard said, he knew not a better physician.

I have but one condition to make before I see the gentleman that he refuse not his fees from me. If I am poor, sir, I am proud. I will not be under obligation, you may *believe*, sir, I will not. I suffer this visit, because I would not appear ungrateful to the few friends I have left, nor obstinate to such of my relations, as may some time hence, for their private satisfaction, inquire after my behaviour in my sick hours. So, sir, you know the condition. And don't let me be vexed. I am very ill ! and cannot debate the matter.

Seeing her so determined, I told her, if it must be so, it should.

Then, sir, the gentleman may come. But I shall not be able to answer many questions. Nurse, you can tell him, at the window there, what a night I have had, and how I have been for two days past. And Mr. Goddard, if he be here, can let him know what I have taken. Pray let me be as little questioned, as possible.

The doctor paid his respects to her, with the gentlemanly address for which he is noted : and she cast up her sweet eyes to him, with that benignity which accompanies her every graceful look.

I would have retired ; but she forbid it.

He took her hand, the lily not of so beautiful a white : Indeed, madam, you are very low, said he : but give me leave to say, that you can do more for yourself, than all the faculty can do for you.

He then withdrew to the window. And, after a short conference with the women, he turned to me, and to Mr. Goddard, at the other window : We can do nothing here, speaking low, but by cordials and nourishment. What friends has the lady ? She seems to be a person of condition ; and, ill as she is, a very fine woman.—A single lady, I presume ?

I whisperingly told him she was. That there were extraordinary circumstances in her case ; as I would have apprized him, had I met with him yesterday : that her friends were very cruel to

her; but that she could not hear them named without reproaching herself; though they were much more to blame than she.

The doctor wrote. He would fain have declined his fee. As her malady, he said, was rather to be relieved by the soothing of a friend, than by the prescriptions of a physician, he should think himself greatly honoured to be admitted rather to *advise* her in the *one* character, than to *prescribe* to her in the *other*.

She answered, that she should be always glad to see so humane a man: that his visits would *keep her in charity with his sex*: but that, were she to *forget* that he was her physician, she might be apt to abate of the confidence in his skill, which might be necessary to effect the amendment that was the end of his visits.

And when he urged her still further, which he did in a very polite manner, and as passing by the door two or three times a day, she said, she should always have pleasure in considering him in the kind light he *offered himself to her*: that *that* might be very generous in one person to offer, which would be as ungenerous in another to accept: that indeed she was not at present high in circumstance; and he saw by the tender (which he *must* accept of) that she had greater respect to *her own convenience*, than to *his merit*, or than to the *pleasure* she should take in his visits.

We all withdrew together, and the doctor and Mr. Goddard having a great curiosity to know something more of her story, at the motion of the latter we went into a neighbouring coffee-house, and I gave them, in confidence, a brief relation of it; making all as light for you as I could; and yet you'll suppose, that in order to do but common justice to the lady's character, heavy must be that light.

Three o'clock. afternoon.

I JUST now called again at Smith's; and am told she is somewhat better; which she attributed to the soothing of her doctor.

Mrs. Smith told me, that, after we were gone, she gave the keys of her trunk and drawers to her and the widow Lovick, and desired them to take an inventory of the contents of them; which they did, in her presence.

They also informed me, that she had requested them to find her a purchaser, for two rich dressed suits; one never worn, the other not above once or twice.

This shocked me exceedingly—*perhaps it may thee a little ! ! !*
—Her reason for so doing, she told them, was, that she should never live to wear them: that her sister, and other relations, were above wearing them: that her mother would not endure in her sight any thing that was hers: that she wanted the money

that she would not be obliged to any body, when she had effects by her for which she had no occasion : and yet, said she, I expect not that they will fetch a price answerable to their value.

They were both very much concerned, as they owned and asked my advice upon it : and the richness of her apparel having given them a still higher notion of her rank than they had before, they supposed she must be of quality ; and again wanted to know her story.

As to disposing of the two suits of apparel, I told Mrs. Smith, that she should pretend, that, upon inquiry, she had found a friend who would purchase the richest of them ; but (*that she might not mistrust*) would stand upon a good bargain. And having twenty guineas about me, I left them with her, in part of payment ; and bid her *pretend* to get her to part with it for as little more as she could induce her to take.

Miss Howe to Miss Clarissa Harlowe.

Thursday morn, July 20.

WHAT, my dearest creature, have been your sufferings !—What must have been your anguish on so disgraceful an insult, committed in the open streets, and in the broad day !

No end, I think, of the undeserved calamities of a dear soul, who has been so unhappily driven and betrayed into the hands of a vile libertine !

I expect your answer to my letter of the 13th. We all expect it with impatience.

His relations are persons of *so much* honour—they are so *very* earnest to rank you among them—the wretch is so very penitent *every one of his* family says he is—*your own* are so implacable—your last distress, though the consequence of his former villainy, yet neither brought on by his direction, nor with his knowledge, and so much resented by him—that my mother is absolutely of opinion, that *you should be his*—especially, if yielding to my wishes as expressed in my letter, and those of all his friends, you *would* have complied had it not been for this horrid arrest.

I will enclose the copy of the letter I wrote to Miss Montague last Tuesday on hearing that nobody knew what was become of you ; and the answer to it, underwritten and signed by Lord M. Lady Sarah Sadleir, and Lady Betty Lawrence, as well as by the young ladies ; and also by the wretch himself.

I own, that I like not the turn of what he has written to me and before I will further interest myself in his favour, I have determined to inform myself *by a friend*, from his own mouth, of his sincerity and whether his *whole inclination* be in his request to me,

exclusive of the *wishes of his relations*. Yet my heart rises against him, on the supposition that there is the shadow of a reason for such a question, the woman Miss Clarissa Harlowe. But I think with my mother that marriage is now the only means left to make your future life tolerably easy—*happy* there is no saying.—His disgraces, in *that* case, in the eye of the world itself, will be more than yours : and to those who know you, glorious will be your triumph.

I am obliged to accompany my mother soon to the Isle of Wight, My aunt Harman is in a declining way, and insists upon seeing us both—and Mr. Hickman too I think.

It would be death to me to set out for the little island, and not see you first : and yet my mother (fond of exerting an authority that she herself, by that exertion, often brings into question) insists, that my next visit to you, *must* be a congratulatory one, as Mrs. Lovelace.

When I know what will be the result of the questions to be put in my name to that wretch, and what is your mind on my letter of the 13th, I shall tell you more of mine.

The bearer promises to make so much dispatch, as to attend you this very afternoon. May he return with good tidings to

Your ever affectionate

ANNA HOWE.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.

Thursday afternoon.

YOU pain me, my dearest Miss Howe, by the ardour of your noble friendship. I will be very brief, because I am not well ; yet a good deal better than I was ; and because I am preparing an answer to yours of the 13th. But, beforehand, I must tell you, my dear, I will *not* have that man—don't be angry with me.—But indeed I won't. So let him be asked no questions about me, I beseech you.

Indeed I am very weak and ill : but I have an excellent physician, Dr. H., and as worthy an apothecary, Mr. Goddard—their treatment of me, my dear, is perfectly *paternal*!—My mind too, I can find begins to strengthen : and methinks, at times, I find myself superior to my calamities,

I shall have sinkings sometimes. I must expect such. And my father's maledict—But you will chide me for introducing that, now I am enumerating my comforts.

But I charge you, my dear, that you do not suffer my calamities to sit too heavy upon your own mind. If you do, that will be to new-point some of those arrows that have been blunted, and lost their sharpness.

You will think very meanly of your Clarissa, if you do not believe, that the greatest pleasure she can receive in this life, is in your prosperity and welfare. Think not of me, my only friend, but as we were in times past : and suppose me gone a great, great way off :—a long journey !—How often are the dearest of friends, at their country's call, thus parted—with a *certainly* for years—with a *probability* for ever !

Love me still, however. But let it be with a weaning love. I am not what I was, when we were *inseparable* lovers, as I may say—our *views* must now be different. Resolve, my dear, to make a worthy man happy, because a worthy man must make *you* so.—And so, my dearest love, for the present adieu !—Adieu, my dearest love ;—but I shall soon write again, I hope !

Mr. Belford to Robert Lovelace, Esq.

Thursday night.

I WAS forced to take back my twenty guineas. How the women managed it, I can't tell (I suppose they too readily found a purchaser for the rich suit) ; but she mistrusted, that I was the advancer of the money ; and would not let the clothes go. But Mrs. Lovick has actually sold for fifteen guineas, some rich lace worth three times the sum ; out of which she repaid her the money she borrowed for fees to the doctor, in an illness occasioned by the barbarity of the most savage of men. *Thou knowest his name !*

The doctor called on her in the morning, it seems, and had a short debate with her about fees. She insisted, that he should take one every time he came, write or not write ; mistrusting, that he only gave verbal directions to Mrs. Lovick, or the nurse, to avoid taking any.

He said, that it would have been impossible for him, had he *not* been a physician, to forbear inquiries after the health and welfare of so excellent a person. He had not the thought of paying her a compliment in declining the offered fee : but he knew her case could not so suddenly vary, as to demand his daily visits. She must permit him, therefore, to inquire of the women below after her health ; and he must not think of coming up, if he were to be *pecuniarily* rewarded for the satisfaction he was so desirous to give himself.

It ended in a compromise for a fee each other time ; which she unwillingly submitted to ; telling him, that though she was at present desolate and in disgrace, yet her circumstances were, of right, high ; and no expenses could rise so, as to be scrupled, whether she lived or died. But she submitted, she added, to the

compromise, in hopes to see him as often as he had opportunity for she really looked upon him, and Mr Goddard, from their kind and tender treatment of her, with a regard next to filial.

I hope thou wilt make thyself acquainted with this worthy doctor, when thou comest to town; and give him thy thanks, for putting her into conceit with the sex that thou hast given her so much reason to execrate.

Farewell.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

Friday night, July 21.

I WILL throw away a few paragraphs upon the contents of thy last shocking letters just brought me; and send what I shall write by the fellow who carries mine on the interview with Hickman.

Reformation, I see, is coming fast upon thee. Thy uncle's slow death, and thy attendance upon him, through every stage towards it, prepared thee for it. But go thou on in thine own way, as I will in mine. Happiness consists in being pleased with what we do: and if thou canst find delight in being *sad*, it will be as well for thee, as if thou wert *merry*, though no other person should join to keep thee in countenance.

I am, nevertheless, exceedingly disturbed at the lady's ill health. It is entirely owing to the cursed arrest. She was absolutely triumphant over me and the whole crew *before*. Thou believest me guiltless of that: so, I hope, does she.—The rest, as I have often said, is a common case; only a little uncommonly circumstanced; that's all: why then, all these severe things from her and from thee?

As to selling her clothes, and her laces, and so forth, it has, I own, a shocking sound with it. What an implacable as well as unjust set of wretches are those of her unkindredly kin who have money of hers in their hands, as well as large arrears of her own estate; yet withhold both, *avowedly* to distress her! But may she not have money of that proud and saucy friend of hers, Miss Howe, more than she wants?—And should not I be overjoyed, thinkest thou, to serve her?—What then is there in the parting with her apparel, but female perverseness?—And I am not sure, whether I ought not to be glad, if she does this out of *spite to me*.—Some disappointed fair ones would have hanged, some drowned themselves. My beloved only revenges herself upon her clothes. Different ways of working has passion in different bosoms, as humours or complexion induce.—Besides, dost think I shall grudge to replace, to three times the value, what she disposes of? So, Jack, there is no great matter in this.

Thou seest how sensible she is of the soothing of the polite doctor: this will enable thee to judge how dreadfully the horrid arrest, and her gloomy father's curse, must have hurt her. I have great hope, if she will but see me, that my behaviour, my contrition, my soothing, may have some happy effects upon her.

But thou art too ready to give me up. Let me seriously tell thee, that all excellence as she is, I think that the earnest interposition of my relations; the implored mediation of that little fury, Miss Howe; and the commissions thou actest under from myself; are such instances of condescension and high value in *them*, and such contrition in *me*, that nothing further can be done.—So here let the matter rest for the present, till she considers better of it.

Miss Howe to Miss Clarissa Harlowe.

MY DEAREST MADAM,

Sat. July 22.

WE are busy in preparing for our little journey and voyage: but I will be ill, I will be very ill, if I cannot hear you are better before I go.

Rogers greatly afflicted me, by telling me the bad way you are in. But now you have been able to hold a pen, and as your sense is strong and clear, I hope that the amusement you will receive from writing will make you better,

I dispatch this by an extraordinary way, that it may reach you time enough to move you to *consider well* before you absolutely decide upon the contents of mine of the 13th, on the subject of the two Miss Montague's visit to me; since, according to what you write, must I answer them.

In your last, you conclude very positively, that you will not be his. To be sure, he rather deserves an infamous death, than such a wife. But, as I really believe him innocent of the arrest, and as all his family are such earnest pleaders, and will be guarantees, for him, I think the compliance with *their* entreaties, and *his own*, will be now the best step you can take; your own family remaining implacable, as I *can assure you they do*. He is a man of sense; and it is not impossible but he may make you a good husband, and in time may become no bad man.

So, my dearest friend, I charge you, if you *can*, to get over your aversion to this vile man. You may yet live to see many happy days, and be once more the delight of all your friends, neighbors, and acquaintance, as well as a stay, a comfort, and a blessing to your Anna Howe.

I long to have your answer to mine of the 13th. Pray keep the messenger till it be ready. If he return on Monday night, it

will be time enough for his affairs, and to find me come back from Colonel Ambrose's who gives a ball on the anniversary of Mrs Ambrose's birth and marriage both in one. The gentry all round the neighborhood are invited this time, on some good news they have received from Mrs. Ambrose's brother, the governor.

My mother promised the colonel for me and herself, in my absence. I would fain have excused myself to her; and the rather, as I had exceptions on account of the day*: but she is almost as young as her daughter; and thinking it not so well to go without me, she told me, she could propose *nothing* that was agreeable to me. And having had a *few sparring blows* with each other very lately, I think I must comply. For I don't love jangling when I can help it; though I seldom make it my study to avoid the occasion, when it offers of itself. I don't know, if either were not a little afraid of the other, whether it would be possible that we could live together:—*I all my father!*—My mamma—what? *All my mother*—what else should I say?

One hour of your company my ever instructive friend, [I thirst for it] how infinitely preferable would it be to me, to all the diversions and amusements with which our sex are generally most delighted—Adieu, my dear!

A. HOWE.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.

Sunday, July 23d.

WHAT pain, my dearest friend, does your kind solicitude for my welfare give me! How much more binding and tender are the ties of pure friendship and the union of like minds, than the ties of nature!

You set before me your reasons, enforced by the opinion of your honoured mother, why I should think of Mr. Lovelace for a husband.

And I have before me your letter of the 13th, containing the account of the visit and proposals, and kind interposition of the two Miss Montagues; in the names of the good Ladies Sarah Sadleir and Betty Lawrence, and in that of Lord M.

Also yours of the 18th, *demanding* me, as I may say, of those ladies, and of that family, when I was so infamously and cruelly arrested, and you knew not what was become of me.

The answer likewise of those ladies, signed in so full and so generous a manner by themselves, and by that nobleman, and those two venerable ladies; and, in his light way, by the wretch himself.

* The 24th of July, Miss Clarissa Harlowe's birth-day.

These, my dearest Miss Howe; and your letter of the 16th, which came when I was under arrest and which I received not till some days after;

Are all before me.

And I have as well weighed the whole matter, and your arguments in support of your advice, as at present my head and my heart will let me weigh them.

I am, moreover, willing to believe, not only from your own opinion, but from the assurances of one of Mr. Lovelace's friends, Mr. Belford, a good-natured and humane man, who spares not to censure the author of my calamities that that man is innocent of the disgraceful arrest:

And even, if you please, in sincere compliment to your opinion, that (over-persuaded by his friends, and ashamed of his unmerited baseness to me) he would in earnest marry *me*, if I would have *him*.

"Well, and now, what is the result of all?—It is this—that I must abide by what I have already declared—and that is, [don't be angry at me, my best friend] that I have much more pleasure in thinking of death, than of such a husband. In short, as I declared in my last, that I cannot [forgive me, if I say, I *will* not] ever be his.

"But you will expect my reasons: I know you will: and if I give them not, will conclude me either obstinate, or implacable, or both: and those would be sad imputations, if just, to be laid to the charge of a person who thinks and talks of *dying*. And yet, to say that resentment and disappointment have no part in my determination, would be saying a thing hardly to be credited. For I own I *have* resentments, strong resentments, but not unreasonable ones, as you will be convinced, if already you are not so, when you know all my story—if ever you do know it—for I begin to fear that I shall not have time to compass what I have intended, and, in a manner, promised you,

"I have one reason to give in support of my resolution, that, I believe, yourself will allow of: but having owned that I have resentments, I will begin with those considerations, in which anger and disappointment have too great a share: in hopes that having once disburdened my mind upon paper, and to my Anna Howe, of those corroding uneasy passions, I shall prevent them for ever from returning to my heart, and to have their place supplied by better, milder, and more agreeable ones.

"My pride, then, my dearest friend, although a great deal mortified, is not *sufficiently* mortified, if it be necessary for me to submit to make that man my choice, whose actions are and ought to be my abhorrence!—What!—Shall I, who have been treated with such premeditated and perfidious barbarity, as is painful to be

thought of, and cannot with modesty be described, think of taking the violator to my heart? Can I vow duty to one so wicked, and hazard my salvation by joining myself to so great a profligate, now I *know* him to be so? Do you think your Clarissa Harlowe so lost, so *sunk*, at least, as that she could, for the sake of patching up, in the world's eye, a broken reputation, meanly appear indebted to the generosity, or perhaps *compassion* of a man, who has, by means so inhuman, robbed her of it? Indeed, my dear, I should not think my penitence for the rash step I took, any thing better than a specious delusion, if I had not got above the least wish to have Mr. Lovelace for my husband.

"Yes, I warrant, I must *creep* to the violator, and be thankful to him for doing me poor justice!

"Do you not see me creep about mine own house preferring all my honest maidens to myself—as if afraid, too, to open my lips, either by way of reproof or admonition, lest their bolder eyes should bid me look inward, and not expect perfection from *them*?

"And shall I entitle the wretch to upbraid me with his generosity and his pity; and perhaps to reproach me, for having been *capable* of forgiving crimes of *such* a nature?

"I once indeed hoped, little thinking him so *premeditatedly* vile a man, that I might have the happiness to reclaim him: I vainly believed, that he loved me well enough to suffer my advice for his good, and the example I humbly presumed I should be enabled to set him, to have weight with him; and the rather, as he had no mean opinion of my morals and understanding: but now, what hope is there left for this my *prime* hope? Were I to marry him, what a figure should I make, preaching virtue and morality to a man whom I had trusted with opportunities to seduce me from all my own duties?—And then, supposing I were to have children by such a husband, must it not, think you, cut a thoughtful person to the heart, to look round upon her little family, and think she had given them a father destined, without a miracle, to perdition; and whose immoralities, propagated among them by his vile example, might, too probably, bring down a curse upon them? And, after all, who knows but that my own sinful compliances with a man, who would think himself entitled to my obedience, might taint my own morals, and make me, instead of a reformer, an imitator of him?—For who *can touch pitch and not be defiled*?

"Let me then repeat, that I truly despise this man! If I know my own heart, indeed I do!—I pity him! *Beneath* my very pity as he is, I nevertheless pity him!—But this I could not do, if I still loved him: for, my dear, one must be greatly sensible

of the baseness and ingratitude of those we love. I love him not, therefore ! My soul disdains communion with him.

Nor, my dear, whatever are the suppositions of such a short-sighted, such a low-souled man, must you impute to gloom, to melancholy, to despondency, nor yet to a spirit of faulty pride, or still *more* faulty revenge, the resolution I have taken never to marry *this* : and if not *this*, *any* man. So far from deserving this imputation, I do assure you, (my dear and *only* love) that I will do every thing I can to prolong my life, till God, in mercy to me, shall be pleased to call for it. I have reason to think my punishment is but the *due* consequence of my fault, and I will not run away from it : but beg of heaven to sanctify it to me. When appetite serves, I will eat and drink what is sufficient to support nature. A very little, you know, will do for that. And whatever my physicians shall think fit to prescribe, I will take, though ever so disagreeable. In short, I will do everything I can do, to convince all my friends, who hereafter may think it worth their while to inquire after my last behaviour, that I possessed my soul with tolerable patience ; and endeavoured to bear with a lot of my own drawing : for thus, in humble imitation of the sublimest exemplar I often say :—Lord, it is thy will ; and it shall be mine. Thou art just in all thy dealings with the children of men ; and I know thou wilt not afflict me beyond what I can bear : and, if I *can* bear it, I *ought* to bear it ; and (thy grace assisting me) I *will* bear it.

“ But here, my dear, is another reason : a reason that will convince you yourself, that I ought not to think of wedlock ; but of a preparation for a quite different event. I am persuaded, as much as that I am now alive, that I shall not long live. The strong sense I have ever had of my fault, the loss of my reputation, my disappointments, the determined resentment of my friends, *aiding* the barbarous usage I have met with where I least deserved it, have seized upon my heart : seized upon it, before it was so well fortified by *religious considerations* as I hope it now is. Don't be concerned, my dear—but I am sure, if I may say it with as little presumption as grief, that God will soon *dissolve my substance, and bring me to death, and to the house appointed for all living.*”

And now, my dearest friend, you know all my mind. And you will be pleased to write to the ladies of Mr. Lovelace's family, that I think myself infinitely obliged to them, for their good opinion of me ; and that it has given me greater pleasure than I thought I had to come in this life, that, upon a little knowledge they have of me, and that not personal, I was thought worthy (after the ill usage I have received) of an alliance with their honourable family : but that I *can by no means think* of their kins-

man for a husband : and do you, my dear, extract from the above such reasons as you think have any weight in them.

I would write myself to acknowledge their favour, had I not more employment for my head, my heart, and my fingers, than I doubt they will be able to go through.

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Mrs. Norton to Miss Clarissa Harlowe.

Monday, July 2d.

EXCUSE, my dearest young lady, my long silence ; I have been extremely ill. My poor boy has also been at death's door ; and, when I hoped that he was better, he has relapsed. Alas ! my dear, he is very dangerously ill. Let us both have your prayers !

Very angry letters have passed between your sister and Miss Howe. Every one of your family is incensed against that young lady. I wish you would remonstrate against her warmth ; since it can do no good ; for they will not believe, but that her interposition has your connivance ; nor that you are so ill as Miss Howe assures them you are.

Before she wrote they were going to send up young Mr. Brand, the clergyman, to make private inquiries of your health, and way of life.—But now they are so exasperated, that they have laid aside their intention.

We have flying reports here, and at Harlowe Place, of some fresh insults which you have undergone : and that you are about to put yourself into Lady Betty Lawrence's protection. I believe they would now be glad (as I should be) that you would do so ; and this, perhaps, will make them suspend, for the present, any determination in your favour.

How unhappy am I, that the dangerous way my son is in prevents my attendance on you ! Let me beg of you to write me word how you are, both as to person and mind.

This is the anniversary, that used to give joy to as many as had the pleasure and honour of knowing you. May the Almighty bless you, and grant, that it may be the only unhappy one that may be ever known by you, my dearest young lady ; and by

Your ever affectionate

JUDITH NORTON.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Mrs. Norton.

Monday night, July 2d.

MY DEAR MRS. NORTON,

HAD I not fallen into fresh troubles, which disabled me for

several days from holding a pen, I should not have forborne enquiring after your health, and that of your son; for I should have been but too ready to impute your silence to the cause, to which, to my very great concern, I find it was owing. I pray to Heaven, my dear good friend, to give you comfort in the way most desirable to yourself.

I am exceedingly concerned at Miss Howe's writing about me to my friends. I do assure you, that I was as ignorant of her intention so to do, as of the contents of her letter. Nor has she yet let me know (discouraged, I suppose, by her ill success) that *she did* write. It is impossible to share the delight which such charming spirits give, without the inconvenience that will attend their volatility.—So mixed are our best enjoyments!

She then gives a brief account of the arrest; of her dejection under it: of her apprehensions of being carried to her former lodgings: of Mr. Lovelace's avowed innocence, as to that insult: of her release by Mr. Belford: of Mr. Lovelace's promise not to molest her: of her clothes being sent her: of the earnest desire of all her friends, and of himself, to marry her; of Miss Howe's, advice to comply with their requests: and of her declared resolution rather to die, than be his, sent to Miss Howe, to be given to his relations, but as the day before. After which she thus proceeds.

Now, my dear Mrs. Norton, you will be surprised, perhaps, that I should have returned such an answer: but when you have every thing before you, you, who know me so well, will not think me wrong. And, besides, I am upon a *better preparation*, than for an earthly husband.

Nor let it be imagined, my dear and ever venerable friend, that my present turn of mind proceeds from gloominess or melancholy: for although it was *brought on* by disappointment (the world shewing me early, even at my first *rushing* into it, its true and ugly face;) yet I hope that it has obtained a better root, and will every day more and more, by its fruits, demonstrate to me, and to all my friends, that it has.

I have written to my sister. Last Friday I wrote. So the dye is thrown. I hope for a gentle answer. But, perhaps, they will not vouchsafe me *any*. It is my *first* direct application, you know. I wish Miss Howe had left me to my own workings in this tender point.

As to the day—I have passed it, as I ought to pass it. It has been a very heavy day to me!—More for my friends, sake, too, than for my own!—How did *they* use to pass it!—What a festivity!—How have they now passed it?—To *imagine* it, how grievous!—

Say not, that those are cruel, who suffer so much for my fault ; and who, for eighteen years together, rejoiced in me, and rejoiced me by their indulgent goodness !—But I will think the rest !—Adieu, my dearest Mrs. Norton !—

Adieu !

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Arabella Harlowe.

Friday, July 21.

IF, my dearest sister, I did not think the state of my health very precarious, and that it was my duty to take this step, I should hardly have dared to approach you, although but with my pen, after having found your censures so dreadfully justified as they have been.

I have not the courage to write to my father himself, nor yet to my mother. And it is with trembling, that I address myself to you, to beg of you to intercede for me, that my father will have the goodness to revoke that heaviest part of the very heavy curse he laid upon me, which relates to *HEREAFTER*; for, as to the *HERE*, I have indeed met with my punishment from the very wretch in whom I was supposed to place my confidence.

As I hope not for restoration to favour, I may be allowed to be very earnest on this head: yet will I not use any arguments in support of my request, because I am sure my father, were it in his power, would not have his poor child miserable for ever.

I have the most grateful sense of my mother's goodness in sending me up my clothes. I would have acknowledged the favour the moment I received them, with the most thankful duty, but that I feared any line from me would be unacceptable.

I would not give fresh offence: so will decline all other commendations of duty and love: appealing to my heart for both, where *both* are flaming with an ardour that nothing but death can extinguish: therefore only subscribe myself, without so much as a name,

My dear and happy sister,

Your afflicted servant.

A letter directed to me, at Mr. Smith's, a glover, in King Street, Covent Garden, will come to hand.

Mr. Belford to Robert Lovelace, Esq.

Edgware, Monday, July 24.

WHAT pains thou takest to persuade thyself, that the lady's ill health is owing to the vile arrest, and to the implacableness of her

friends ! Both primarily (if they were) to be laid at thy door. What poor excuses will good heads make for the evils they are put upon by bad hearts !—But 'tis no wonder that he who can sit down premeditatedly to do a bad action, will content himself with a bad excuse : and yet, what fools must he suppose the rest of the world to be, if he imagines them as easy to be imposed upon, as he can impose upon himself ?

In vain dost thou impute to pride or wilfulness the necessity to which thou hast reduced this lady of parting with her clothes ; for can she do otherwise, and be the noble-minded creature she is ?

Her implacable friends have refused her the current cash she left behind her ; and wished, as her sister wrote to her, to see her reduced to want : probably therefore they will not be sorry that she is reduced to such straits ; and will take it for a justification from Heaven of their wicked hard-heartedness. Thou canst not suppose she would take supplies from thee : to take them from me would, in her own opinion, be taking them from thee. Miss Howe's mother is an avaricious woman : and, perhaps, the daughter can do nothing of that sort unknown to her ; and, if she *could*, is too noble a girl to deny it, if charged. And then Miss Harlowe is firmly of opinion, that she shall never want nor wear the things she disposes of.

The lady shut herself up at six o'clock yesterday afternoon ; and intends not to see company till seven or eight this : not even her nurse—Imposing upon herself a severe fast. And why ? *It is her BIRTH-DAY !*—Blooming—yet declining in her very blossom !—Every birth-day till this, no doubt, happy !—What must be her reflections !—What ought to be thine !

This, meantime, I will venture it in preference to all the ancient poets and philosophers. And this is now a convincing proof to me, and shames as much an infidel's presumption as his ignorance, that those who know least, are the greatest scoffers. A pretty pack of would-be wits of us, who censure without knowledge, laugh without reason, and are most noisy and loud against things we know least of !

Mr. Belford to Robert Lovelace, Esq.

Wednesday, July 26.

ABOUT three o'clock I went again to Smith's. The lady was writing when I sent up my name ; but admitted of my visit. I saw a visible alteration in her countenance for the worse ; and Mrs. Lovick respectfully accusing her of too great assiduity to her pen, early and late, and of her abstinence the day before, I took

notice of the alteration; and told her, that her physician had greater hopes of her than she had of herself; and I would take the liberty to say, that despair of recovery allowed not room for cure.

She said, she neither despaired nor hoped. Then stepping to the glass, with great composure, My countenance, said she, is indeed an honest picture of my heart. But the mind will run away with the body at any time.

Writing is all my diversion, continued she; and I have subjects that cannot be dispensed with. As to my hours, I have always been an early riser: but now rest is less in my power than ever. Sleep has a long time ago quarrelled with me, and will not be friends, although I have made the first advances. What *will* be, *must*.

She then stepped to her closet, and brought me a parcel sealed up with three seals: be so kind, said she, as to give this to your friend. A very grateful present it ought to be to him: for, sir, this packet contains such letters of his to me, as, compared with his actions, would reflect dishonour upon all his sex, were they to fall into other hands.

As to my letters to him, they are not many. He may either keep or destroy them, as he pleases.

I thought, Lovelace, I ought not to forego this opportunity to plead for you: I therefore, with the packet in my hand, urged all the arguments I could think of in your favour.

She heard me out with more attention than I could have promised myself, considering her determined resolution.

I would not interrupt you, Mr. Belford, said she, though I am far from being pleased with the subject of your discourse. The motives for your pleas in his favour, are generous. I love to see instances of generous friendship in either sex. But I have written my full mind on this subject to Miss Howe, who will communicate it to the ladies of his family. No more, therefore, I pray you, upon a topic that may lead to disagreeable recriminations.

Her apothecary came in. He advised her to the air, and blamed her for so great an application, as he was told she made to her pen; and he gave it as the doctor's opinion, as well as his own, that she would recover, if she herself desired to recover, and would use the means.

Mr. Goddard took his leave; and I was going to do so too, when the maid came up, and told her, a gentleman was below, who very earnestly enquired after her health, and desired to see her: his name Hickman.

She was overjoyed: and bid the maid desire the gentleman to walk up.

I would have withdrawn; but I suppose she thought it was

likely I should have met him upon the stairs; and so she forbid it.

She shot to the stairs-head to receive him, and, taking his hand, asked half a dozen questions (without waiting for any answer) in relation to Miss Howe's health; acknowledging, in high terms, her goodness in sending him to see her, before she set out upon her little journey.

He gave her a letter from that young lady which she put into her bosom, saying, she would read it by-and-by.

He was visibly shocked to see how ill she looked.

You look at me with concern, Mr. Hickman, said she—O sir! times are strangely altered with me, since I saw you last at my dear Miss Howe's!—What a cheerful creature was I then!—my heart at rest! my prospects charming! and beloved by every body!—but I will not pain you!

Indeed, madam, said he, I am grieved for you at my soul.

He turned away his face, with visible grief in it.

Her own eyes glistened: but she turned to each of us, presenting one to the other—him to me, as a gentleman *truly* deserving to be *called so*—me to him, as *your* friend, indeed [how was I at that instant, ashamed of myself!] but, nevertheless, as a man of humanity; detesting my friend's baseness; and desirous of doing her all manner of good offices.

Mr. Hickman received my civilities with a coldness, which however, was rather to be expected on your account, than that it deserved exception on mine. And the lady invited us both to breakfast with her in the morning; he being obliged to return the next day.

Thursday, July 27.

I WENT this morning, according to the lady's invitation, to breakfast, and found Mr. Hickman with her.

A good deal of heaviness and concern hung upon his countenance; but he received me with more respect than he did yesterday; which, I presume, was owing to the lady's favourable character of me.

He spoke very little; for I suppose they had all their talk out yesterday, and before I came this morning.

By the hints that dropt, I perceived that Miss Howe's letter gave an account of your interview with her at Col. Ambrose's—of your professions to Miss Howe; and Miss Howe's opinion that marrying you was the only way now left to repair her wrongs.

Mr. Hickman, as I also gathered, had pressed her, in Miss Howe's name, to let her, on her return from the Isle of Wight, find her at a neighbouring farmhouse, where neat apartments would be made ready to receive her. She asked how long it

would be before they returned? And he told her, it was proposed to be no more than a fortnight out and in. Upon which she said, she should then perhaps have time to consider of that kind proposal.

He had tendered her money from Miss Howe; but could not induce her to take any. No wonder I was refused! she only said, that if she had occasion, she would be obliged to nobody but Miss Howe.

Mr. Goddard her apothecary came in before breakfast was over. At her desire he sat down with us. Mr. Hickman asked him, if he could give him any consolation in relation to Miss Harlowe's recovery, to carry down to a friend who loved her as she loved her own life?

The lady, said he, will do very well, if she will resolve upon it herself. Indeed you *will*, madam. The doctor is entirely of this opinion; and has ordered nothing for you, but weak jellies and innocent cordials, lest you should starve yourself. And let me tell you, madam, that so much watching, so little nourishment, and so much grief, as you seem to indulge, is enough to impair the most vigorous health, and to wear out the strongest constitution.

What, sir, said she, can I do? I have no appetite. Nothing you call nourishing will stay on my stomach. I do what I can, and have such kind directors in Dr. H. and you, that I should be inexcusable if I did not.

I'll give you a regimen, madam, replied he; which, I am sure, the doctor will approve of, and will make physick unnecessary in your case. And that is, "go to rest at ten at night. Rise not till seven in the morning. Let your breakfast be water-gruel, or milk pottage, or weak broths: your dinner any thing you like, so you will *but* eat: a dish of tea with milk in the afternoon; and sago for your supper: and, my life for yours, this diet, and a month's country air, will set you up."

We were much pleased with the worthy gentleman's disinterested regimen: and she said, referring to her nurse (who vouched for her), Pray, Mr. Hickman, let Miss Howe know the good hands I am in; and as to the kind charge of the gentleman, assure her, that all I promised to her, in the longest of my two last letters, on the subject of my health, I do and will, to the utmost of my power, observe. I have engaged, sir, (to Mr. Goddard) I have engaged, sir, (to me) to Miss Howe, to avoid all wilful neglects. It would be an unpardonable fault, and very ill become the character I would be glad to deserve, or the temper of mind I wish my friends hereafter to think me mistress of, if I did not.

Mr. Hickman and I went afterw

neighbouring coffee-

house; and he gave me some account of your behaviour at the ball on Monday night, and of your treatment of him in the conference he had with you before that; which he represented in a more favourable light than you have done yourself: and yet he gave his sentiments of you with great freedom, but with the politeness of a gentleman.

He told me how very determined the lady was against marrying you; that she had early this morning, set herself to write a letter to Miss Howe, in answer to one he brought her, which he was to call for at twelve, it being almost finished before he saw her at breakfast; and that at three he proposed to set out on his return.

* * * *

I threw myself in Mr. Hickman's way, on his return from the lady.

He was excessively moved at taking leave of her; being afraid, as he said to me (though he would not tell her so) that he should never see her again. She charged him to represent every thing to Miss Howe in the most favourable light that the truth would bear.

He told me of a tender passage at parting; which was, that having saluted her at her closet-door, he could not help once more taking the same liberty, in a more fervent manner, at the stairs-head, whither she accompanied him; and this in the thought, that it was the last time he should ever have that honour; and offering to apologize for his freedom (for he had pressed her to his heart with a vehemence, that he could neither account for nor resist)—“Excuse you, Mr. Hickman! that I will: you are my brother and my friend: and to shew you, that the good man who is to be happy with my beloved Miss Howe, is very dear to me, you shall carry to her this token of my love” [offering her sweet face to his salute, and pressing his hand between hers]: “And perhaps her love of *me* will make it more agreeable to her, than her punctilio would otherwise allow it to be: and tell her, said she, dropping on one knee, with clasped hands, and uplifted eyes, that in this posture you see me, in the last moment of our parting, begging a blessing upon you both, and that you may be the delight and comfort of each other for many, very many happy years!”

Tears, said he, fell from my eyes: I even sobbed with mingled joy and sorrow: and she retreating as soon as I raised her, I went down stairs highly dissatisfied with myself for going; yet unable to stay; my eyes fixed the contrary way to my feet, as long as I could behold the skirts of her raiment.

Pr'ythee tell me, thou vile Lovelace, if thou hast not a notion, even from these jejune descriptions of mine, that there must be a more exalted pleasure in intellectual friendship, than ever thou couldst taste in the gross fumes of sensuality? And whether it

may not be possible for thee, in time, to give that preference to the *infinitely* preferable, which, I hope, now, that I shall always give!

I will leave thee to make the most of this reflection, from

Thy true friend,

J. BELFORD.

Miss Howe to Miss Clarissa Harlowe.

Tuesday, July 25.

YOUR two affecting letters were brought to me (as I had directed any letter from you should be) to the colonel's, about an hour before we broke up. I could not forbear dipping into them there; and shedding more tears over them than I will tell you of; although I dried my eyes as well as I could, that the company I was obliged to return to, and my mother should see as little of my concern as possible.

I am yet (and was then still more) excessively fluttered. The occasion I will communicate to you by-and-by: for nothing but the flutters given by the stroke of death could divert my *first* attention from the sad and solemn contents of your last favour. These therefore I must begin with.

How can I bear the thoughts of losing so dear a friend! I will not so much as suppose it. Indeed I *cannot*! Such a mind as yours was not vested in humanity to be snatched away from us so soon. There must be still a great deal for you to do for the good of all who have the happiness to know you.

You chide me in yours of Sunday on the freedom I take with your friends.

I *may* be warm. I know I *am*—too warm. Yet warmth in friendship, surely, cannot be a crime; especially when our friend has great merit, labours under oppression, and is struggling with undeserved calamity.

I have no notion of coolness in friendship, be it dignified or distinguished by the name of *prudence*, or what it will.

You may excuse your relations. It was ever your way to do so. But, my dear, other people must be allowed to judge as they please. I am not *their* daughter, nor the sister of your brother and sister—I thank heaven, I am not.

You leave it to me to give a negative to the hopes of the noble family, whose only disgrace is, that so very vile a man is so nearly related to them. But yet—alas! my dear, I am so fearful of consequences, so *selfishly* fearful, if this negative must be given—I don't know what I should say—but give me leave to suspend, however, this negative, till I hear from you again.

This earnest courtship of you into their splendid family is so

very honourable to you—they so *justly* admire you—you must have had such a *noble triumph* over the base man—He is so *much* in earnest—the world knows so *much* of the unhappy affair—you may do *still* so *much* good—your will is so inviolate—your relations are so implacable—think dear, and *re*-think.

And let me leave you to do so, while I give you the occasion of the flutter I mentioned at the beginning of this letter; in the conclusion of which you will find the obligation I have consented to lay myself under, to refer this important point once more to your discussion, before I give in your name, the negative that cannot, when given, be with honour to yourself repented of or recalled.

Know then, my dear, that I accompanied my mother to Colonel Ambrose's, on the occasion I mentioned to you in my former. Many ladies and gentlemen were there whom you know: particularly Miss Kitty D'Oily, Miss Lloyd, Miss Biddy d'Ollvffe, Miss Biddulph, and their respective admirers with the colonel's two nieces: fine women both; besides many whom you know not, for they were strangers to me but by name. A splendid company, and all pleased with one another, till Colonel Ambrose introduced one, who, the moment he was brought into the great hall, set the whole assembly into a kind of agitation.

It was your villain.

I thought I should have sunk as soon as I set my eyes upon him. My mother was also affected; and, coming to me, Nancy, whispered she, can you bear the sight of that wretch without too much emotion?—If not, withdraw into the next apartment.

I could not remove. Every body's eyes were glanced from him to me. I sat down and fanned myself, and was forced to order a glass of water. O that I had the eye the basilisk is reported to have, thought, I, and that his life were within the power of it!—directly would I kill him.

He entered with an air so hateful to me, but so agreeable to every other eye, that I could have looked him dead for that too.

After the general salutations he singled out Mr. Hickman, and told him, he had recollected some parts of his behaviour to him when he saw him last, which had made him think himself under obligation to his patience and politeness.

And so, indeed, he was.

Miss D'Oily, upon his complimenting her among a knot of ladies, asked him in their hearing, how Miss Clarissa Harlowe did?

He heard, he said, you were not so well as he wished you to be, and as you deserved to be.

O, Mr. Lovelace, said she, what have you to answer for on that young lady's account, if all be true that I have heard.

I have a great deal to answer for, said the unblushing villain but that dear lady has so many excellencies, and so much delicacy, that little sins are great ones in her eye.

He turned, with an unconcerned air, to Miss Playford, and made her some genteel compliments. I believe you know her not. She visits his cousins Montague. Indeed he had something in his specious manner to say to every body; and this too soon quieted the disgust each person had at his entrance.

I still kept my seat, and he either saw me not, or would not yet see me; and addressing himself to my mother, taking her unwilling hand, with an air of high assurance, I am glad to see you here, madam, I hope Miss Howe is well. I have reason to complain greatly of her: but hope to owe to her the highest obligation that can be lain on man.

My daughter, sir, is accustomed to be too warm and too zealous in her friendships for either my tranquillity, or her own.

There had indeed been some late occasion given for mutual displeasure between my mother and me: but I think she might have spared this to *him*; though nobody heard it I believe but the person to whom it was spoken, and the lady who told it me; for my mother spoke it low.

We are not wholly, madam, to live for ourselves, said the vile hypocrite: it is not every one who has a soul capable of friendship; and what a heart must that be, which can be insensible to the interests of a suffering friend?

This sentiment from Mr. Lovelace's mouth! said my mother—forgive me, sir; but you can have no end, surely, in endeavouring to make *me* think as well of you as some innocent creatures have thought of you, to their cost.

She would have flung from him. But, detaining her hand—Less severe, dear madam, said he, be less severe in *this* place, I beseech you. You will allow, that a very faulty person may see his errors; and when he does, and owns them, and repents, should he not be treated mercifully?

Your air, sir, seems not to be that of a penitent. But the place may as properly excuse this subject, as what you call my severity.

But dearest madam, permit me to say, that I hope for your interest with your *charming* daughter (was his sycophant word) to have it put in my power to convince all the world, that there never was a truer penitent. And why, why this anger, dear madam, (for she struggled to get her hand out of his) these violent airs—so *maidenly*! [impudent fellow!]
—May I not ask, if Miss Howe be here?

Then turning round, he 'spied me, and with a very low bow, approached me.

I was all in a flutter, you may suppose. He would have taken my hand. I refused it, all glowing with indignation : every body's eyes upon us.

I went from him to the other end of the room, and sat down as I thought, out of his hated sight ; but presently I heard his odious voice, whispering, behind my chair, (he leaning upon the back of it, with impudent unconcern) *Charming Miss Howe!* looking over my shoulder : *one request*—I started up from my seat ; but could hardly stand neither, for very indignation—O this sweet but becoming disdain ! whispered on the insufferable creature—I am sorry to give you all this emotion : but either here, or at your own house, let me entreat from you one quarter of an hour's audience.—I beseech you, madam, but one quarter of an hour, in any of the adjoining apartments.

Not for a *kingdom*, fluttering my fan. I knew not what I did.—But I could have killed him.

We are so much observed—else on my knees, my dear Miss Howe, would I beg your interest with your charming friend.

She'll have nothing to say to you.

I had not then your letters, my dear.

Killing words !—But indeed I have deserved them, and a dagger in my heart besides. I am so conscious of my demerits, that I have no hope, but in *your* interposition—could I owe that favour to Miss Howe's mediation, which I cannot hope for on any other account—

My mediation, vilest of men !—*My* mediation !—I abhor you !—From my *soul*, I abhor you, vilest of men !—Three or four times I repeated these words, stammering too—I was excessively fluttered.

You can call me nothing, madam, so bad as I will call myself. I *have* been, indeed, the vilest of men ; but now I am not so. Permit me—every body's eyes are upon us !—but one moment's audience—to exchange but ten words with you, dearest Miss Howe—in whose presence you please—for your dear friend's sake—but ten words with you in the next apartment.

It is an insult upon me, to presume that I would exchange *one* with you, if I could help it !—Out of my way ! Out of my sight—fellow !

I was going out of the assembly in great disorder. He was at the door as soon as I.

How kind this is, said the wretch and, ready to follow me, opened the door for me.

I turned back upon this : and not knowing what I did, snap-

ped my fan just in his face, as he turned short upon me; and the powder flew from his hair.

Every body seemed as much pleased, as I was vexed.

He turned to Mr. Hickman, nettled at the powder flying, and at the smiles of the company upon him; Mr. Hickman, you will be one of the happiest men in the world, because you are a *good* man, and will do nothing to provoke this passionate lady; and because she has too much good sense to be provoked without reason: but else the lord have mercy upon you!

He then turned to my mother, resolved, to be even with *her* too: Where, good madam, could Miss Howe get all this spirit?

The company around smiled; for I need not tell you, that my mother's high spiritedness is pretty well known; and she, sadly vexed, said, Sir, you treat me, as you do the rest of the world—but—

I beg pardon, madam, interrupted he: I might have spared my question—and instantly (I retiring to the other end of the hall) he turned to Miss Playford; What would I give, madam, to hear you sing that song you obliged us with at Lord M.'s!

He then, as if nothing had happened, fell into a conversation with her and Miss D'Ollyffe, upon music; and whisperingly sung to Miss Playford; holding her two hands, with such airs of genteel unconcern, that it vexed me not a little to look round, and see how pleased half the giddy fools of our sex were with him, notwithstanding his notorious wicked character.

When the wretch saw how industriously I avoided him (shifting from one part of the hall to another) he at last boldly stepped up to me, as my mother and Mr. Hickman were talking to me; and thus before them accosted me:

I beg your pardon, madam; but by your mother's leave, I must have a few moments' conversation with you, either here, or at your own house; and I beg you will give me the opportunity.

Nancy, said my mother, hear what he has to say to you. In my presence you may: and better in the adjoining apartment, if it must be, than to come to you at our own house.

I retired to one corner of the hall, my mother following me and he, taking Mr. Hickman under the arm, following her—Well, sir, said I, what have you to say?—Tell me *here*.

I have been telling Mr. Hickman, said he, how much I am concerned for the injuries I have done to the most excellent woman in the world: and yet, that she obtained such a glorious triumph over me the last time I had the honour to see her, as, with my penitence, ought to have abated her former resentments: but that I will, with all my soul, enter into any measures to obtain her forgiveness of me. My cousins Montague have told you this. Lady Betty and Lady Sarah and my Lord M. are engaged for my

honour. I know your power with the dear creature. My cousins told me, you gave them hopes you would use it in my behalf. My Lord M. and his two sisters, are impatiently expecting the fruits of it. You must have heard from her before now: I hope you have. And will you be so good as to tell me, if I may have any hopes?

If I must speak on this subject, let me tell you, that you have broken her heart. You know not the value of the lady you have injured. You deserve her not. And she despises you, as she ought.

Dear Miss Howe, mingle not passion with denunciations so severe. I must know my fate. I will go abroad once more, if I find her absolutely irreconcilable. But I hope she will give me leave to attend upon her, to know my doom from her own mouth.

He vindicated not any part of his conduct, but that of the arrest; and so solemnly protested his sorrow for his usage of you, accusing himself in the freest manner, and by *deserved* appellations, that I promised to lay before you this part of our conversation. And now you have it.

My mother, as well as Mr. Hickman, believes, from what passed on this occasion, that he is touched in conscience for the wrongs he has done you: but, by his whole behaviour, I must own, it seems to me that nothing can touch him for half an hour together. Yet I have no doubt, that he would willingly marry you; and it piques his pride, I could see, that he should be denied; as it did mine, that such a wretch had dared to think it in his power to have such a woman whenever he pleased; and that it must be accounted a condescension, and matter of obligation (by all his own family at least) that he would vouchsafe to think of marriage.

Now, my dear, you have before you the reason why I suspend the decisive negative to the ladies of his family. My mother, Miss Lloyd, and Miss Biddulph, who were inquisitive after the subject of our retired conversation, and whose curiosity I thought it was right, in some degree, to gratify (especially as those young ladies are of our select acquaintance), are all of opinion that you should be his.

You will let Mr. Hickman know your whole mind; and when he acquaints me with it, I will tell you all my own.

Meantime, may the news he will bring me of the state of your health, be favourable! prays, with the utmost fervency,

Your ever faithful and affectionate,

ANNA HOWE

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.

Thursday, July 27.

MY DEAREST MISS HOWE;

AFTER I have thankfully acknowledged your favour in sending Mr. Hickman to visit me before you set out upon your intended journey, I must chide you for suspending the decisive negative, which, upon such full deliberation, I had entreated you to give to Mr. Lovelace's relations.

I am sorry that I am obliged to *repeat* to you, my dear, who know me so well, that, were I sure I should live *many years*, I would not have Mr. Lovelace; much less can I think of him, as it is probable I may not live *one*.

As to the *world* and its *censures*, you know, my dear, that however desirous I always was of a fair fame, yet I never thought it right to give more than a *second place* to the world's opinion. The challenges made to Mr. Lovelace, by Miss D'Oily, in public company, are a fresh proof that I have lost my reputation; and what advantage would it be to me, were it retrievable, and were I to live long, if I could not acquit myself to *myself*?

I send you inclosed the copy of my letter to my sister. I hope it will be thought to be written with a true penitent spirit; for indeed it is. I desire that you will not think I stoop too low in it since there can be no such thing as *that*, in a child to parents whom she has unhappily offended.

But if still they should pass it by with the contempt of silence (for I have not yet been favoured with an answer) I must learn to think it right in them to do so; especially as it is my first direct application: for I have often censured the boldness of those, who applying for a favour, which it is in a person's option to grant, or to refuse, take the liberty of being offended, if they are not gratified; as if the *petitioned* had not as good a right to *reject*, as the *petitioner* to ask.

But if my letter should be answered, and that in such terms as will make me loth to communicate it to so warm a friend—you must not, my dear, take upon you to censure my relations; but allow for them, as they know not what I have suffered; as being filled with *just* resentments against me (*just* to them, if they *think* them just;) and as not being able to judge of the reality of my penitence.

Your account of the gay unconcerned behaviour of Mr. Lovelace, at the colonel's, does not surprise me at all, after I am told, that he had the intrepidity to go thither, knowing who were *invited* and *expected*.—Only this, my dear, I really wonder at, that Miss Howe could imagine, that I could have a thought of such a man for a husband.

Poor wretch ! I pity him, to see him fluttering about ; abusing talents that were given him for excellent purposes ; taking inconsideration for courage ; and dancing, fearless of danger, on the edge of a precipice !

But indeed his threatening to see me, most sensibly alarms and shocks me. I cannot but hope that I never, never more, shall see him in this world.

Since you are so loth, my dear, to send the desired negative to the ladies of his family, I will only trouble you to transmit the letter I shall inclose for that purpose ; directed indeed to yourself, because it was to you that those ladies applied themselves on this occasion ; but to be sent by you to any one of the ladies, at your own choice.

I commend myself, my dearest Miss Howe, to your prayers ; and conclude with repeated thanks for sending Mr. Hickman to me ; and with wishes for your health and happiness, and for the speedy celebration of your nuptials ;

Your ever affectionate and obliged,

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.

[Inclosed in the preceding.]

Thursday, July 27.

MY DEAREST MISS HOWE,

SINCE you seem loth to acquiesce in my determined resolution, signified to you as soon as I was able to hold a pen, I beg the favour of you, by this, or by any other way you think most proper, to acquaint the worthy ladies who applied to you in behalf of their relation, that, although I am infinitely obliged to their generous opinion of me, yet I cannot consent to *sanctify*, as I may say, Mr. Lovelace's repeated breaches of all moral sanctions, and hazard my *future* happiness by an union with a man, through whose premeditated injuries, in a long train of the basest contrivances, I have forfeited my *temporal* hopes.

He himself, when he reflects upon his own actions, must surely bear testimony to the justice, as well as fitness of my determination. The ladies, I dare say, would, were they to know the whole of my unhappy story.

Be pleased to acquaint them, that I deceive myself, if my resolution on this head (however ungratefully, and even inhumanly, he has treated me) be not owing more to *principle* than *passion*. Nor can I give a stronger proof of the truth of this assurance

than by declaring that I *can* and *will* forgive him, on this one easy condition, *that he will never molest me more.*

In whatever way you choose to make this declaration, be pleased to let my most respectful compliments to the ladies of that noble family, and to my Lord M. accompany it. And do you, my dear, believe that I shall be, to the last moment of my life,

Your ever obliged and affectionate,

CLARISSA HARLOWE

Miss Howe to Miss Clarissa Harlowe.

Friday night, July 28.

I WILL now, my dearest friend, write to you all my mind, without reserve, on your resolution not to have this vilest of men. You gave me, in yours of Sunday the 23d, reasons so worthy of the pure mind of my Clarissa, in support of this your resolution, that nothing but self-love, lest I should lose my ever-amiable friend, could have prevailed upon me to wish you to alter it. Indeed, I thought it was impossible there could be (however desirable) so noble an instance given by any of our sex, of a passion conquered, when there were so many inducements to give way to it. And therefore I was willing to urge you once more to overcome your just indignation, and to be prevailed upon by the solicitations of *his* friends, before you carried your resentments to so great a height, that it would be more difficult for you, and less to your honour, to comply, than if you had complied at first.

But now, my dear, that I see you fixed in your noble resolution: and that it is impossible for your pure mind to join itself with that of so perjured a miscreant. I congratulate you most heartily upon it! and beg your pardon for but seeming to doubt, that *theory* and *practice* were not the same thing with my beloved Clarissa.

I have only one thing that saddens my heart on this occasion: and that is the bad state of health Mr. Hickman (unwillingly) owns you are in. Hitherto you have well observed the doctrine you always laid down to me. That a censured person should first seek to be justified to *herself*, and give but a *second* place to the world's opinion of her; and, in all cases where the two could not be reconciled, have preferred the *first* to the *last*; and are, of consequence, well justified to your own heart as well as to your Anna Howe. Let me therefore beseech you to endeavour, by all possible means, to recover your health and spirits: and this, as what, if it *can* be effected, will crown the work, and shew the world, that you were *indeed* got above the base wretch; and, though put out of your course for a little while, could resume it again, and go

on blessing all within your knowledge, as well by your example, as by your precepts.

For heaven's sake, then, for the world's sake, for the honour of our sex, and for *my* sake, once more I beseech you, try to overcome this shock : and if you *can* overcome it, I shall then be as happy as I wish to be ; for I cannot, indeed I cannot, think of parting with you, for many, many years to come.

I send this day, by a particular hand, to the Miss Montagues, your letter of just reprobation of the greatest profligate in the kingdom ; and hope I shall not have done amiss that I transcribe some of the paragraphs of your letter of the 23d, and send them with it, as you at first intended should be done.

You are, it seems (and that too much for your health) employed in writing : I hope it is in penning down the particulars of your tragical story. And my mother has put me in mind to press you to it, with a view, that one day, if it might be published under feigned names, it would be of as much use as honour to the sex. My mother says, she cannot help admiring you for the propriety of your resentment in your refusal of the wretch ; and she would be extremely glad to have her advice of penning your sad story complied with. And then, she says, your noble conduct throughout your trials and calamities will afford not only a shining example to our sex, but at the same time (those calamities befalling SUCH a person) a fearful warning to the inconsiderate young creatures of it.

On Monday we shall set out on our journey ; and I hope to be back in a fortnight, and on my return will have one pull more with my mother for a London journey : and, if the *pretence must* be the buying of clothes, the *principal motive* will be that of seeing once more my dear friend, *while* I can say, I have not finally given consent to the change of a visitor into a relation, and so can call myself MY OWN, as well as

Your

ANNA HOWE.

Mrs. Norton to Miss Clarissa Harlowe.

Friday, July 28.

MY DEAREST YOUNG LADY,

I HAVE the consolation to tell you, that my son is once again in an hopeful way, as to his health. He desires his duty to you. He is very low and weak, and so am I. But this is the first time that I have been able, for several days past, to sit up to write, or I would not have been so long silent.

Your letter to your sister is received and answered. You have

the answer by this time, I suppose. I wish it may be to your satisfaction ; but am afraid it will not ; for, by Betty Barnes, I find they were in a great ferment on receiving yours, and much divided whether it should be answered or not. They will not yet believe that you are so ill, as (to my infinite concern) I find you are. What passed between Miss Harlowe and Miss Howe, has been, as I feared it would be, an aggravation.

I shewed Betty two or three passages in your letter to me ; and she seemed moved, and said, she would report them favourably, and would procure me a visit from Miss Harlowe, if I would promise to shew the same to *her*. But I have heard no more of that.

Methinks, I am sorry you refuse the wicked man : But doubt not, nevertheless, that your motives for doing so are more commendable than my wishes that you would not. But as you would be resolved, as I may say, on life, if you gave way to such a thought ; and as I have so much interest in your recovery ; I cannot forbear shewing this regard to myself, and to ask you, if you cannot get over your just resentment ?—But I dare say no more on this subject.

What a dreadful thing indeed was it for my dearest tender young lady to be arrested in the streets of London !—How does my heart go over again for you, what yours must have suffered at that time !—Yet this, to such a mind as yours, must be light, compared to what you had suffered before.

O my dearest Miss Clary, how shall we know what to pray for, when we pray, but that *God's will may be done*, and that we may be *resigned to it* !—When at nine years old, and afterwards at eleven, you had a dangerous fever, how incessantly did we all grieve, and pray, and put up our vows to the throne of grace for your recovery !—For all our lives were bound up in your life—yet *now*, my dear, as it has proved (especially if we are *soon* to lose you) what a much more desirable event, both for you and for us, would it have been, had we then lost you.

I am glad you are with such honest people : and that you have all your effects restored. How dreadfully have you been used, that one should be glad of such a poor piece of justice as that !

Your talent at moving the passions is always hinted at, and this Betty of your sister's never comes near me, that she is not full of it. But, as you say, whom has it moved that you wished to move ? Yet, were it not for this unhappy notion, I am sure your mother would relent. Forgive me, my dear Miss Clary ; for I must try one way to be convinced if my opinion be not just. But I will not tell you what that is, unless it succeeds. I will try pure duty and love to *them*, as well as to *you*.

May heaven be your support in all your trials, is the constant prayer, my dearest young lady, of

Your ever affectionate friend and servant,
JUDITH NORTON.

Miss Cl. Harlowe to Mrs. Judith Norton.

Saturday, July 29.

I CONGRATULATE you, my dear Mrs. Norton, with all my heart, on your son's recovery; which I pray to God, with your own health, to perfect.

I write in some hurry, being apprehensive of the consequence of the hints you give of some method you propose to try in my favour [with my relations, I presume you mean]: but you will not tell me what, you say, if it prove unsuccessful.

Now I must beg of you, that you will not take any step in my favour, with which you do not first acquaint me.

I have but one request to make to them, besides what is contained in my letter to my sister; and I would not, methinks, for the sake of their own future peace of mind, that they should be teased so, by your well-meant kindness, and that of Miss Howe, as to be put upon denying me that. And why should more be asked for me than I can partake of? more than is absolutely necessary for my own peace?

You suppose I should have my sister's answer to my letter by the time yours reached my hand. I have it: and a severe one a very severe one, it is. Yet, considering my fault, in their eyes, and the provocations I am to suppose they so newly had from my dear Miss Howe, I am to look upon it as a favour that it was answered at all. I will send you a copy of it soon: as also of mine, to which it is an answer.

I have reason to be very thankful, that my father has withdrawn that heavy malediction, which affected me so much—a parent's curse, my dear Mrs. Norton! What child could die in peace under a parent's curse! so literally fulfilled too as this has been in what relates to this life.

My heart is too full to touch upon the particulars of my sister's letter. I can make but *one* atonement for my fault. May *that* be accepted! And may it soon be forgotten, by *every* dear relation, that there was such an unhappy daughter, sister, or niece, as Clarissa Harlowe.

My cousin Morden was one of those, who was so earnest in prayers for my recovery, at nine and eleven years of age, as you mention. My sister thinks he will be one of those, who will

wish I never had had a being. But pray, when he does come let me hear of it with the first.

You think, that were it not for that unhappy notion of my moving talent, my mother would relent. What would I give to see her once more, and, although unknown to her, to kiss but the hem of her garment.

Could I have thought, that the last time I saw her would *have been the last*, with what difficulty should I have been torn from her embraced feet!—And when, screened behind the yew-hedge, on the 5th of April last, I saw my father, and my uncle Antony, and my brother and sister, how little did I think, that that would be the last time I should ever see them; and in so short a space, that so many dreadful evils would befall me!

But I can write nothing but what must give you trouble. I will therefore, after repeating my desire that you will not intercede for me but with my previous consent, conclude with the assurance, that I am and ever will be,

Your most affectionate and dutiful,

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Miss Arab. Harlowe to Miss Cl. Harlowe.

[In answer to hers of Friday, July 21.]

Thursday, July 27.

O MY UNHAPPY LOST SISTER,

WHAT a miserable hand have you made of your romantic and giddy expedition!—I pity you at my heart.

You may *well* grieve and repent!—Lovelace has left you!—In what way or circumstances, you know best.

I wish your conduct had made your case more pitiable. But 'tis your own seeking!

God help you!—For you have not a friend will look upon you!—Poor, wicked, undone creature!—Fallen, as you are, against warning, against expostulation, against duty!

But it signifies nothing to reproach you. I weep over you.

My poor mother!—Your rashness and folly have made *her* more miserable than *you* can be.—Yet she has besought my father to grant your request.

My uncles joined with her; for they thought there was a little more modesty in your letter than in the letters of your pert advocate: and my father is pleased to give me leave to write; but only these words for *him*, and no more: 'That he withdraws the curse he laid upon you, at the first hearing of your wicked flight.

so far as it is in his power to do it, and hopes that your present punishment may be all that you will meet with. For the rest, he will never own you, nor forgive you ; and grieves he has such a daughter in the world.'

All this, and more, you have deserved from him, and from all of *us* : but what have you done to this abandoned libertine, to deserve what you have met with at *his* hands?—I fear, I fear, sister !—But no more !—A blessed four months' work have you made of it !

My brother is now at Edinburgh, sent thither by my father [though he knows not this to be the motive] that he may not meet your triumphant deluder.

We are told he would be glad to marry you : but why, then, did he abandon you ? He had kept you till he was tired of you, no question ; and it is not likely he would wish to have you, but upon the terms you have already, without all doubt, been *his*.

Monday last was your birth-day. Think, poor ungrateful wretch, as you are ! how we all used to keep it ; and you will not wonder to be told, that we ran away from one another that day. But God give you true penitence, if you have it not already ! And it *will* be true, if it be equal to the shame and the sorrow you have given us all.

Your afflicted sister,

ARABELLA HARLOWE.

Your cousin Morden is every day expected in England. He, as well as others of the family, when he comes to hear what a blessed piece of work you have made of it, will wish you never had had a being.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.

Sunday, July 30.

YOU have given me great pleasure, my dearest friend, by your approbation of my reasonings, and of my resolution founded upon them, never to have Mr. Lovelace. This approbation is so *right* a thing, give me leave to say, from the nature of the case, and from the strict honour and true dignity of mind, which I always admired in my Anna Howe, that I could hardly tell to what, but to my evil destiny, which of late would not let me please any body, to attribute the advice you gave me to the contrary.

But let not the ill state of my health, and what that may naturally tend to, sadden you. I have told you, that I will not run away from life, nor avoid the means that may continue it, if God see fit : and if he do *not*, who shall repine at his will ?

If it shall be found, that I have not acted unworthy of your love, and of my own character, in my greater trials, that will be a happiness to both on reflection.

The shock that you so earnestly advise me to try to get above, was a shock, the greatest that I could receive. But, my dear, as it was not occasioned by my *fault*, I hope I am already got above it. I hope I am.

I am more grieved (at times, however) for *others*, than for *myself*. And so I *ought*. For as to *myself*, I cannot but reflect, that I have had an escape, rather than a loss, in missing Mr. Lovelace for a husband—even had he *not* committed the vilest of all outrages.

Let any one, who knows my story, collect his character from his behaviour to *me*, *before* that outrage; and then judge, whether it was in the least probable that such a man should make me happy. But to collect his character from his principles with regard to the *sex in general*, and from his enterprises upon many of them, and to consider the *cruelty of his nature*, and the *sportiveness of his invention*, together with the *high opinion he has of himself*, it will not be doubted that a wife of his must have been miserable; and more miserable if she loved him, than she could have been were she to be indifferent to him.

* * * *

You are very obliging to me, *intentionally*, I know, when you tell me, it is in my power to hasten the day of Mr. Hickman's happiness. But yet, give me leave to say, that I admire this kind assurance less than any other paragraph of your letter.

In the first place, you know it is *not* in my power to say *when* I can dismiss my physician; and you should not put the celebration of a marriage *intended by yourself*, and so *desirable* to your *mother*, upon so precarious an issue. Nor will I accept of a compliment, which must mean a slight to *her*.

If any thing could give me a relish for life, after what I have suffered, it would be the hopes of the continuance of the more than sisterly love, which has, for years, uninterruptedly bound us together as one mind.—And why, my dear, should you defer giving (by a tie still stronger) another friend to one who has so few?

I am glad you have sent my letter to Miss Montague. I hope I shall hear no more of this unhappy man.

I had begun the particulars of my tragical story; but it is so painful a task, and I have so many more important things to do and, as I apprehend, so little time to do them in, that, could I avoid it, I would go no further in it.

Then to this hour, I know not by what means several of his machinations to ruin me were brought about; so that some material parts of my sad story must be defective, if I were to sit

down to write it. But I have been thinking of a way that will answer the end wished for by your mother and you full as well, perhaps better.

Mr. Lovelace, it seems, has communicated to his friend Mr. Belford all that passed between himself and me, as he went on. Mr. Belford has not been able to deny it. So that (as we may observe by the way) a poor young creature, whose indiscretion has given a libertine power over her, has a reason, *she little thinks of*, to regret her folly; since these wretches, who have no more honour in one point than in another, scruple not to make her weakness a part of their triumph to their brother libertines.

I have nothing to apprehend of this sort, if I have the justice done me in his letters, which Mr. Belford assures me I have: and therefore the particulars of my story, and the base arts of this vile man, will, I think, be best collected from those very letters of his (if Mr. Belford can be prevailed upon to communicate them.)

There is one way which may be fallen upon to induce Mr. Belford to communicate these letters; since he seems to have (and declares he always had) a sincere abhorrence of his friend's baseness to me: but that, you'll say, when you hear it, is a strange one. Nevertheless, I am very earnest upon it at present.

It is no other than this:

I think to make Mr. Belford the executor of my last will and with this view I permit his visits with the less scruple: and every time I see him, from his concern for me, am more and more inclined to do so. If I hold in the same mind, and if he accept the trust, and will communicate the materials in his power, those, joined with what you can furnish, will answer the whole end.

I know you will start at my notion of such an executor: but pray, my dear, consider, in my present circumstances, what I can do better, as I am empowered to make a will, and have considerable matters in my own disposal.

Your mother, I am sure, would not consent that *you* should take this office upon you. It might subject *Mr. Hickman* to the insults of that violent man. *Mrs. Norton* cannot, for several reasons respecting herself. My *brother* looks upon what I ought to have, as his right: my *uncle Harlowe* is already one of my trustees (as my cousin *Morden* is the other) for the estate my grandfather left me: but you see I could not get from my own family the few guineas I left behind me at *Harlowe Place*; and my *uncle Antony* once threatened to have my grandfather's will controverted. My *father*!—To be sure, my dear, I could not expect that my *father* would do all I wish should be done: and a will to be executed by a father for a daughter, (parts of it, perhaps, absolutely against his own judgment) carries somewhat daring and prescriptive in the very word.

If indeed my *cousin Morden* were to come in time, and would undertake this trust—but even *him* it might subject to hazards, and the more, as he is a man of great spirit, and as the other man (of *as great*) looks upon me (unprotected as I have long been) as his property.

Now Mr. Belford, as I have already mentioned, knows every thing that has passed. He is a man of spirit, and, it seems, as fearless as the other, with more humane qualities. You don't know, my dear, what instances of sincere humanity this Mr. Belford has shewn, not only on occasion of the cruel arrest, but on several occasions since. And Mrs. Lovick has taken pains to inquire after his general character; and hears a very good one of him, for justice and generosity in all his concerns of *Meum* and *Tuum*, as they are called: he has a knowledge of law matters; and has two executorships upon him at this time, in the discharge of which his honour is unquestioned.

All these reasons have already in a manner *determined* me to ask this favour of him; although it will have an odd sound with it to make an intimate friend of Mr. Lovelace my executor.

My father has been so good as to take off the heavy malediction he laid me under. I must be now solicitous for a last blessing; and that is all I shall presume to petition for. My sister's letter, communicating this grace, is a severe one: but as she writes to me as *from every body*, how could I expect it to be otherwise?

If you set out to-morrow, this letter cannot reach you till you get to your aunt Harman's. I shall therefore direct it thither, as Mr. Hickman instructed me.

If your relations in the little island join their solicitations with your mother's commands, to have your nuptials celebrated before you leave them, let me beg of you, my dear, to oblige them. How grateful will the notification that you have done so, be to

Your ever faithful and affectionate

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Harlowe.

Saturday, July 29.

I REPINE not, my dear sister, at the severity you have been pleased to express in the letter you favoured me with; because the severity was accompanied with the grace I had petitioned for; and because the reproaches of mine own heart are stronger than any other person's reproaches can be: and yet I am not half so culpable as I am imagined to be: as would be allowed, if all the circumstances of my unhappy story were known; and which I shall be

ready to communicate to Mrs. Norton, if she be commissioned to inquire into them; or to you, my sister, if you can have patience to hear them.

I remembered, with a bleeding heart, what day the 24th of July was. I began with the eve of it; and I passed the day itself—as it was fit I should pass it. Nor have I any comfort to give to my dear and ever honoured father and mother, and to you, my Bella, but this—that, as it was the first *unhappy* anniversary of my birth, in all probability it will be the *last*.

Believe me, my dear sister, I say not this merely to move compassion, but from the *best* grounds. And as, on that account, I think it of the highest importance to my peace of mind to obtain one further favour, I would choose to owe to your intercession, as my sister, the leave I beg, to address half a dozen lines (with the hopes of having them answered as I wish) to either or to both my honoured parents, to beg their *last blessing*.

This blessing is all the favour I have now to ask. It is all I *dare* to ask: yet am I afraid to rush at once, though by *letter*, into the presence of either.

And if I did not ask it, it might seem to be owing to stubbornness and want of duty, when my heart is all humility and penitence. Only, be so good as to embolden me to attempt this task—write but this one line, “Clary Harlowe, you are at liberty to write as you desire.” This will be enough—and shall, to my last hour, be acknowledged as the greatest favour, by

Your truly penitent sister,

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Mrs. Norton to Miss Clarissa Harlowe.

Monday, July 31

MY DEAREST YOUNG LADY,

I LONG to be with you, now I am better, and now my son is in a fine way of recovery. But is it not hard to have it signified to me, that at present it will not be taken well, if I go?—I suppose, while the reconciliation, which I hope will take place, is negotiating by means of the correspondence so newly opened between you and your sister. But if you would have me come, I will rely on my good intentions, and risk every one's displeasure.

Mr. Brand has business in town, to solicit for a benefice which it is expected the incumbent will be obliged to quit for a better preferment: and when there, he is to inquire privately after your way of life, and of our health.

He is a very officious young man and, but that your uncle

Harlowe (who has chosen him for this errand) regards him as an oracle, your mother had rather any body else had been sent.

He is one of those puzzling, over-doing gentlemen, who think they see farther into matters than any body else, and are fond of discovering mysteries where there are none, in order to be thought shrewd men.

I know not the day he is to set out: and as his inquiries are to be private, be pleased to take no notice of this intelligence. I have no doubt that your life and conversation are such, as may defy the scrutinies of the most officious inquirer.

I am just now told, that you have written a second letter to your sister: but I am afraid they will wait for Mr. Brand's report, before further favour will be obtained from them; for they will not yet believe you are so ill as I fear you are.

But you would soon find, that you have an indulgent mother, were she at liberty to act according to her own inclination. And this gives me great hopes that all will end well at last: for I verily think that you are in the right way to a reconciliation. God give a blessing to it, and restore your health and you to all your friends, prays

Your ever affectionate

JUDITH NORTON.

Your good mother has privately sent me five guineas: she is pleased to say, to help us in the illness we have been afflicted with; but, more likely, that I might send them to you, as from myself. I hope, therefore, I may send them up, with ten more I have still left.

I will send you word of Mr. Morden's arrival, the moment I know it.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Mrs. Norton.

Wednesday, Aug. 2.

YOU give me, my dear Mrs. Norton, great pleasure in hearing of yours and your son's recovery. May you continue, for many, many years a blessing to each other!

You tell me, that you did actually write to my mother *offering* to inclose to her mine of the 24th past: and you say it was not *required* of you. That is to say, although you cover it over as gently as you could, that your offer was rejected; which makes it evident that no plea will be heard for me. Yet, you bid me hope, that the grace I sued for, would, in *time*, be granted.

The grace I then sued for was indeed granted: but you are afraid, you say, that they will wait for Mr. Brand's report, before

favour will be obtained in return to the second letter which I wrote to my sister: and you add, that I have an indulgent mother, were she at liberty to act according to her own inclination; and that all will end well at last.

But what, my dear Mrs. Norton, what is the grace I sue for in my second letter?—It is not that they will receive me into favour—if they think it is, they are mistaken. I do not, I cannot expect that: nor, as I have often said, should I, if they *would* receive me, bear to live in the eye of those dear friends whom I have so grievously offended. 'Tis only, simply, a blessing I ask: a blessing to *die* with, not to *live* with.—Do they know that? And do they know that their unkindness will perhaps shorten my date? So that their favour, if ever they intend to grant it, may come too late.

Once more, I desire you not to think of coming to me. I have no uneasiness now but what proceeds from the apprehension of seeing a man I would not see for the world, if I could help it; and from the severity of my nearest and dearest relations: a severity *entirely their own*, I doubt; for you tell me that *my brother is at Edinburgh!* You would therefore heighten their severity, and make yourself enemies besides, if you were to come to me—don't you see that you would?

Mr. Brand may come, if he will. He is a clergyman, and *must mean well*; or I must think so, let him say of me what he will. All my fear is, that, as he knows I am in disgrace with a family whose esteem he is desirous to cultivate; and as he has obligations to my uncle Harlowe, and to my father, he will be but a languid acquitter—not that I am afraid of what he, or any body in the world, can hear as to my conduct. You may, my revered and dear friend, indeed you may, rest satisfied, that that is such as may warrant me to challenge the inquiries of the most officious.

Don't afflict yourself about money matters on my account. I have no occasion for money. I am glad my mother was so considerate to you. I was in pain for you, on the same subject. But heaven will not permit so good a woman to want the humble blessings she was always satisfied with. I wish every individual of our family were but as rich as you!—O my mamma Norton, you are rich indeed!—The true riches are such content as you are blessed with.—And I hope in God, that I am in the way to be rich too.

Adieu, my ever indulgent friend. You say, all will be at last happy—and I *know* it will—I confide that it will, with as much security, as you may, that I will be to my last hour,

Your ever grateful and affectionate

CL. HARLOWE.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

Tuesday, Aug. 1.

I AM most confoundedly chagrined and disappointed: for here, on Saturday, arrived a messenger from Miss Howe with a letter to my cousins; which I knew nothing of till yesterday: when Lady Sarah and Lady Betty were procured to be here, to sit in judgment upon it with the old peer, and my two cousins. And never was bear so miserably baited as thy poor friend!—And for what?—Why, for the cruelty of Miss Harlowe: for have I committed any *new* offence? And would I not have reinstated myself in her favour upon her own terms, if I could? And is it fair to punish me for what is my misfortune, and not my fault? Such *event-judging* fools as I have for my relations? I am ashamed of them all.

In that of Miss Howe was inclosed one to *her* from Miss Harlowe, to be transmitted to my cousins, containing a final rejection of me; and that in very vehement and positive terms; yet she pretends, that in this rejection she is governed more by *principle* than *passion*—[D—'d lie as ever was told!] And, as a proof that she is, says, that she *can* forgive me, and *does* on this one condition, that I will never molest her more—the whole letter so written, as to make *herself* more admired, *me* more detested.

I now swear it over-again to thee—"Were her death to follow in a week after the knot is tied, by the Lord of heaven it *shall* be tied, and she shall die a Lovelace!" Tell her so, if thou wilt: but, at the same time, tell her, that I have no *view* to *her fortune*: and that I will solemnly resign that, and all pretensions to it, in whose favour she pleases, if she resign life issueless.—I am not so low-minded a wretch as to be *guilty* of any sordid views to her fortune—let her judge for herself then, whether it be not for her honour rather to leave this world a Lovelace than a Harlowe.

But do not think I will entirely rest a cause so near my heart, upon an advocate, who so much more admires his client's adversary, than his client. I will go to town in a few days, in order to throw myself at her feet: and I will carry with me, or have at hand, a *resolute, well prepared* parson: and the ceremony shall be performed, let what will be the consequence.

But if she will permit me to attend her for this purpose at either of the churches mentioned in the licence (which she has by her, and, thank heaven! has not returned me with my letters); then will I not disturb her; but meet her at the altar in either church, and will engage to bring my two cousins to attend her, and even Lady Sarah and Lady Betty; and my Lord M. in person shall give her to me.

Or, if it will be still more agreeable to her, I will undertake,

that either Lady Sarah or Lady Betty, or both, shall go to town, and attend her down; and the marriage shall be celebrated in their presence, and in that of Lord M. either here or elsewhere, at her own choice.

Do not play me booty, Belford; but sincerely and warmly use all the eloquence thou art master of, to prevail upon her to choose one of these three methods. One of them she *must* choose—by my soul, she must.

Here is Charlotte tapping at my closet door for admittance. What the devil wants Charlotte!—I will bear no more reproaches!—Come in, girl.

* * * *

My cousin Charlotte, finding me writing on with too much earnestness to have any regard for politeness to her, and guessing at my subject, besought me to let her see what I had written.

I obliged her, and she was so highly pleased on seeing me so much in earnest, that *she* offered, and I accepted her offer, to write a letter to Miss Harlowe; with permission to treat me in it as she thought fit.

I shall inclose a copy of her letter.

When she *had* written it, she brought it to me, with apologies for the freedom taken with me in it: but I excused it; and she was ready to give me a kiss for joy of my approbation: and I gave her two for writing it; telling her, I had hopes of success from it; and that I thought she had luckily hit it off.

I have great dependence upon thy zeal and thy friendship: hasten back to her, therefore, and resume a task *so* interesting to me, that it is equally the subject of my dreams, as of my waking hours.

Miss Montague to Miss Clarissa Harlowe

DEAREST MADAM,

Tuesday, Aug. 1.

ALL our family is deeply sensible of the injuries you have received at the hands of one of it, whom you only can render in any manner worthy of the relation he stands in to us all: and if, as an act of mercy and charity, the greatest your pious heart can shew, you will be pleased to forgive his past wickedness and ingratitude, and suffer yourself to be our relation, you will make us the happiest family in the world: and I can engage that Lord M. and Lady Sarah Sadleir, and Lady Betty Lawrence, and my sister, who are all admirers of your virtues, and of your nobleness of mind, will for ever love and reverence you, and do every thing in all their powers to make you amends for what you have suffered from Mr. Lovelace. This, madam, we should not, however, dare

to petition for, were we not assured, that Mr. Lovelace is most sincerely sorry for his past vileness to you; and that he will, on his knees, beg your pardon, and vow eternal love and honour to you.

Let me, *our dearest cousin*, [we cannot deny ourselves the pleasure of calling you so,] let me intreat you to give me your permission for my journey to London: and put it in the power of Lord M. and of the ladies of the family, to make you what reparation they *can* make you, for the injuries which a person of the greatest merit in the world has received from one of the most audacious men in it; and you will infinitely oblige us all, and particularly her, who repeatedly presumes to style herself,

Your affectionate *cousin*, And obliged servant,
CHARLOTTE MONTAGUE.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Montague.

DEAR MADAM,

Thursday, Aug. 3.

I AM infinitely obliged to you for your kind and condescending letter. A letter, however, which heightens my regrets, as it gives me a new instance of what a happy creature I might have been in an alliance so much approved of by such worthy ladies, and which, on their accounts, and on that of Lord M. would have been so reputable to myself, and was once so desirable.

But, indeed, indeed, madam, my heart sincerely repulses the man, who, descended from such a family, could be guilty, *first* of such premeditated violence as he has been guilty of; and, as *he* knows, *further* intended me, on the night previous to the day he set out for Berkshire; and, *next*, pretending to spirit, could be so mean, as to wish to lift into that family a person he was capable of abasing into a companionship with the most abandoned of her sex.

Allow me then, dear madam, to declare with fervour, that I think I never could deserve to be ranked with the ladies of a family so splendid and so noble, if, by vowing love and honour at the altar to such a violator, I could *sanctify*, as I may say, his unprecedented and elaborate wickedness.

Permit me, however, to make one request to my good Lord M. and to Lady Betty, and Lady Sarah, and to your kind self and your sister—it is, that you will all be pleased to join your authority and interests to prevail upon Mr. Lovelace not to molest me further.

Be pleased to tell him, that, if I am designed *for life*, it will be very cruel in him to attempt to hunt me out of it; for I am determined never to see him more, if I can help it.

If I am, on the other hand, destined for *death*, it will be no less cruel, if he will not permit me to die in peace—since a peaceable and happy end I wish him. Indeed I do.

Every worldly good attend you, dear madam, and every branch of the honourable family, is the wish of one, whose misfortune it is, that she is obliged to disclaim any other title than that of,

Dear madam, Your and their

Obliged and faithful servant,

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Mr. Belford to Robert Lovelace, Esq.

Thursday afternoon, Aug. 3.

I AM just now agreeably surprised by the following letter delivered into my hands by a messenger from the lady. The letter she mentions, as inclosed,* I have returned, without taking a copy of it. The contents of it will soon be communicated to you, I presume, by other hands. They are an absolute rejection of thee—*Poor Lovelace!*—

TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

SIR,

Aug. 3.

YOU have frequently offered to oblige me in any thing that shall be within your power: and I have such an opinion of you, as to be willing to hope, that at the times you made these offers, you meant more than mere compliment.

I have, therefore, two requests to make you: the first I will now mention; the other, if this shall be complied with, otherwise not.

It behoves me to leave behind me such an account as may clear up my conduct to several of my friends who will not at present concern themselves about me: and Miss Howe and her mother, are very solicitous that I will do so.

I am apprehensive that I shall not have time to do this; and you will not wonder that I have less and less inclination to set about such a painful task; especially as I find myself unable to look back with patience on what I have suffered: and shall be too much discomposed by the retrospection, were I obliged to make it, to proceed with the requisite temper in a task of *still greater* importance which I have before me.

It is very evident to me, that your wicked friend has given you, from time to time, a circumstantial account of all his behaviour to me, and devices *against* me; and you have more than once assured me, that he has done my character all the justice I could wish for both by writing and speech.

* See the above to Miss Montagna.

Now, sir, if I may have a fair, a faithful specimen from his letters or accounts to you, written upon some of the most interesting occasions, I shall be able to judge, whether there will or will not be a necessity for me, for my honour's sake, to enter upon the solicited task.

If, sir, you think fit to comply with my request, the passages I would wish to be transcribed (making neither better nor worse of the matter) are those which he has written to you, on or about the 7th and 8th of June, when I was alarmed by the wicked pretence of a fire; and what he has written from Sunday June 11 to the 19th. And in doing this you will much oblige

Your humble servant,

CL. HARLOWE.

Now, Lovelace, since there are no hopes for thee of her returning favour—since some praise may lie for thy ingenuousness, having never offered [*as more diminutive minded libertines would have done*] to palliate thy crimes, by aspersing the lady, or her sex—since she may be made easier by it—since thou must fare better from thine own pen, than from hers—and finally, since thy actions have manifested, that thy letters are not the most guilty part of what she *knows* of thee—I see not why I may not oblige her, upon her honour, and under the restrictions, and for the reasons she has given; and this without breach of the confidence due to friendly communications; especially as I might have added, *Since thou gloriest in thy pen, and in thy wickedness, and canst not be ashamed.*

Mr. Belford to Robert Lovelace, Esq.

Friday night, Aug. 4.

I HAVE actually delivered to the lady the extracts she requested me to give her from your letters. I do assure you that I have made the very best of the matter for you, *not* that conscience, but that friendship, could oblige me to make. I have changed or omitted some free words. The warm description of her person in the *fire scene*, as I may call it, I have omitted. I have told her, that I have done justice to you, in the justice you have done to her unexampled virtue.

The lady is extremely uneasy at the thoughts of your attempting to visit her. For heaven's sake (your word being given) and for pity's sake (for she is really in a very weak and languishing way) let me beg of you not to think of it.

Yesterday afternoon she received a cruel letter (as Mrs. Lovick supposes it to be, by the effect it had upon her) from her

sister in answer to one written last Saturday, entreating a blessing and forgiveness from her parents.

She acknowledges, that if the same decency and justice are observed in all your letters, as in the extracts I have obliged her with (as I have assured her they are), she shall think herself freed from the necessity of writing her own story : and this is an advantage to thee which thou oughtest to thank me for.

But what thinkest thou is the second request she had to make to me? No other than that I would be her *executor*!—Her motives will appear before thee in proper time : and then, I dare to answer, will be satisfactory.

You cannot imagine how proud I am of this trust. I am afraid I shall too soon come into the execution of it.

Saturday morning, Aug. 5.

I AM just returned from visiting the lady, and thanking her in person for the honour she has done me ; and assuring her, if called to the sacred trust, of the utmost fidelity and exactness.

I found her very ill. I took notice of it. She said, she had received a second hard-hearted letter from her sister ; and she had been writing a letter (and that on her knees) directly to her mother ; which, *before*, she had not had the courage to do. It was for a last blessing, and forgiveness. No wonder, she said, that I saw her affected. Now that I had accepted of the last charitable office for her (for which, as well as for complying with her other request, she thanked me) I should one day have all these letters before me : and could she have a *kind one* in return to that she had been now writing, to *counterbalance* the unkind one she had from her sister, she might be induced to shew me both together—otherwise, for her sister's sake, it were no matter how few saw the poor Bella's letter.

I knew she would be displeased if I had censured the cruelty of her relations : I therefore only said, that surely she must have enemies, who hoped to find their account in keeping up the resentments of her friends against her.

It may be so, Mr. Belford, said she ; the unhappy never want enemies. One fault, wilfully committed, authorizes the imputation of many more. Where the ear is opened to accusations, accusers will not be wanting ; and every one will officiously come with stories against the disgraced child, where nothing dare be said in her favour. I should have been wise in time, and not have needed to be convinced, by my own misfortunes, of the truth of what common experience daily demonstrates. Mr. Lovelace's baseness, my father's inflexibility, my sister's reproaches, are the natural consequences of my own rashness ; so I must make the best of my hard lot. Only, as these consequences fol-

low one another so closely, while they are *new*, how can I help being anew affected.

I let her know, that I was going out of town till Monday. She wished me pleasure; and said she should be glad to see me on my return.

Adieu !

Miss Arab. Harlowe to Miss Cl. Harlowe.

[In answer to hers of July 29.]

Thursday morn. Aug. 3.

SISTER CLARY,

I WISH you would not trouble me with any more of your letters. You had always a knack at writing; and depended upon making every one do what you would when you wrote, but your wit and your folly have undone you. And now, as all naughty creatures do, when they can't help themselves, you come begging and praying, and make others as uneasy as yourself.

When I wrote last to you, I *expected* that I should not be at rest.

And so you'd creep on, by little and little, till you'll want to be received again.

But you only hope for *forgiveness*, and a *blessing*, you say. A blessing for what, sister Clary? Think for what!—However I re'd your letter to my father and mother.

I won't tell you what my father said—one who has the true sense you boast to have of your misdeeds, may guess, without my telling you, what a justly incensed father would say on such an occasion.

My poor mother—O wretch! what has not your ungrateful folly cost my poor mother!—Had you been less a darling, you would not, perhaps, have been so graceless: but I never in my life saw a cockered favorite come to good.

My heart is full, and I can't help writing my mind: for your crimes have disgraced us all; and I am afraid and ashamed to go to any public or private assembly or diversion:—I *need* not say why, when your actions are the subject either of the open talk, or of the affronting whispers, of both sexes at all such places.

Upon the whole, I am sorry I have no more comfort to send you: but I find nobody willing to forgive you.

I don't know what *time* may do for you; and when it is seen that your penitence is not owing more to disappointment than to true conviction: for it is too probable, Miss Clary, that, had you gone on as swimmingly as you expected, and had not your

feather-headed villain abandoned you, we should have heard nothing of these moving supplications: nor of any thing but defiance from *him*, and a guilt gloried in from *you*. And this is every one's opinion as well as that of

Your afflicted sister,

ARABELLA HARLOWE.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to her Mother.

HONOURED MADAM,

Sat. Aug. 5.

NO self-convicted criminal ever approached her angry and just judge with greater awe, nor with a truer contrition, than I do you by these lines.

Indeed I must say, that if the matter of my humble prayer had not respected my future welfare, I had not dared to take this liberty. But my heart is set upon it, as upon a thing next to God Almighty's forgiveness necessary for me.

Had my happy sister known my distresses, she would not have wrung my heart, as she has done, by a severity which I must needs think unkind and unsisterly.

But complaint of any unkindness from her belongs not to me: yet, as she is pleased to write that it must be seen that my penitence is less owing to disappointment than to true conviction, permit me, madam, to insist upon it, that, if such a plea can be allowed me, I am actually *entitled* to the blessing I sue for; since my humble prayer is founded upon a true and unfeigned repentance: and this you will the readier believe, if the creature who never, to the best of her remembrance, told her mamma a wilful falsehood, may be credited, when she declares, as she does in the most solemn manner, that she met the seducer with a determination not to go off with him: that the rash step was owing more to compulsion than to infatuation; and that her heart was so little in it, that she repented and grieved from the moment she found herself in his power; and for every moment after, for several weeks *before* she had any cause from him to apprehend the usage she met with.

Wherefore, on my knees, my ever-honoured mamma, (for on my knees I write this letter) I do most humbly beg your blessing: say but, in so many words, (I ask you not, madam, to call me your daughter)—*Lost, unhappy wretch, I forgive you! and may God bless you!*—this is all! let me, on a blessed scrap of paper, but see one sentence to this affect, under your dear hand, that I may hold it to my heart in my most trying struggles, and I shall think it a passport to heaven. And if I do not too much presume, and if it were *WE* instead of *I*, and both your honoured

names subjoined to it. I should then have nothing more to wish. Then would I say, "Great and merciful God; thou seest here in this paper thy poor unworthy creature absolved by her justly offended parents: O join, for my Redeemer's sake, thy all-gracious *fiat*, and receive a repentant sinner to the arms of thy mercy!"

I can conjure you, madam, by no subject of motherly tenderness, that will not, in the opinion of my severe censurers, (before whom this humble address must appear) add to my reproach: let me therefore, for God's sake, prevail upon you to pronounce me blest and forgiven, since you will thereby sprinkle comfort through the last hours of

Your
CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Miss Montague to Miss Clarissa Harlowe.

[In answer to hers of Aug. 3.]

DEAR MADAM,

Monday, Aug. 7.

WE were all of opinion *before* your letter came, that Mr. Lovelace was utterly unworthy of you, and deserved condign punishment, rather than to be blessed with such a wife: and hoped for *more* from your kind consideration for *us*, than any we supposed you could have for so base an *injurer*. For we were all determined to love you, and admire you, let *his* behaviour to you be what it would.

But, after your letter, what can be said?

I am, however, commanded to write in all the subscribing names, to let you know how greatly your sufferings have affected us: to tell you, that my Lord M. has forbid him ever more to enter the doors of the apartments where he shall be: and as you labour under the unhappy effects of your friends' displeasure, which may subject you to inconveniences, his Lordship, and Lady Sarah, and Lady Betty, beg of you to accept for your life, or, at least, till you are admitted to enjoy your own estate, of one hundred guineas *per* quarter, which will be regularly brought you by an especial hand, and of the inclosed bank bill for a beginning. And do not, dearest madam, we all beseech you, do not think you are beholden (for this token of Lord M.'s and Lady Sarah's and Lady Betty's love to you) to the *friends of this vile man*; for he has not one friend left among us.

We each of us desire to be favoured with a place in your esteem; and to be considered upon the same foot of relationship as if what was once so much our pleasure to hope *would be*, had

been. And it shall be our united prayer, that you may recover health and spirits, and live to see many happy years: and since this wretch can no more be pleaded for, that, when he is gone abroad, as he is now preparing to do, we may be permitted the honour of a personal acquaintance with a lady who has no equal. These are the earnest requests, dearest young lady of

Your affectionate friends,

and most faithful servants,

M.

SARAH SADLEIR.

ELIZ. LAWRENCE.

CHARL. MONTAGUE.

MARTH. MONTAGUE.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

[In answer to his of Aug. 4.]

Monday, Aug. 7.

AND so you have actually delivered to the fair implacable, extracts of letters written in the confidence of friendship! Take care—take care, Belford—I do indeed love you better than I love any man in the world: but this is a very delicate point. The matter is grown very serious to me. My heart is bent upon having her. And have her I will, though I marry her in the agonies of death.

She is very earnest, you say, that I will not offer to molest her. *That*, let me tell her, will absolutely depend upon herself, and the answer she returns, whether by pen and ink, or the contemptuous one of silence, which she bestowed upon my last four to her: and I will write it in such humble, and in such reasonable terms, that if she be not a true Harlowe, she *shall* forgive me. But as to the *executorship*, which she is for conferring upon thee—thou shalt not be her *executor*: let me perish if thou shalt.—Nor shall she die. Nobody shall be any thing, nobody shall *dare* to be any thing, to her, but I.—Thy happiness is already too great, to be admitted daily to her presence; to look upon her, to talk to her, to hear her talk, while I am forbid to come within view of her window.—What a reprobation is this, of the man who was once more dear to her than all the men in the world!—and now to be able to look down upon me, while her exalted head is hid from me among the stars, sometimes with scorn, at other times with pity, I cannot bear it.

This I tell thee, that if I have not success in my effort by letter, I will overcome the creeping folly that has found its way to my heart, or I will tear it out in her presence, and throw it at hers

that she may see how much more tender than her own that organ is, which she, and you, and every one else, have taken the liberty to call callous.

Mr. Lovelace to Miss Clarissa Harlowe.

Monday, Aug. 7.

LITTLE as I have reason to expect either your patient ear, or forgiving heart, yet cannot I forbear to write to you once more (as a more pardonable intrusion, perhaps, than a visit would be), to beg of you to put it in my power to atone, as far as it is possible to atone, for the injuries I have done you.

Your angelic purity and my awakened conscience, are standing records of your exalted merit, and of my detestable baseness: but your forgiveness will lay me under an eternal obligation to you.—Forgive me then, my dearest life, my earthly good, the visible anchor of my future hope!—As you (who believe you have something to be forgiven for) hope for pardon yourself, forgive me, and consent to meet me, upon your own conditions, and in whose company you please, at the holy altar, and to give yourself a title to the most repentant and affectionate heart that ever beat in a human bosom.

But perhaps a time of probation may be required. It may be impossible for you, as well from *indisposition* as *doubt*, so soon to receive me to absolute favour as my heart wishes to be received. In this case, I will submit to your pleasure; and there shall be no penance which you can impose, that I will not cheerfully undergo; if you will be pleased to give me hope, that after my expiation, suppose of months, wherein the regularity of my future life and actions shall convince you of my reformation, you will at last be mine.

Let me beg the favour, then, of a few lines, encouraging me in this *conditional* hope, if it must not be a still *nearer* hope, and a more generous encouragement.

If you refuse me this, you will make me desperate. But even then I must, at all events, throw myself at your feet, that I may not charge myself with the omission of any earnest, any humble effort, to move you in my favour: for in YOU, madam, in YOUR *forgiveness*, are centered my hopes as to *both worlds*: since to be reprobated finally by *you*, will leave me without expectation of mercy from *above*!—

I do most solemnly assure you, that no temporal or worldly views induce me to this earnest address. I deserve not forgiveness from *you*. Nor do my Lord M. and his sisters from *me*. I despise them from my heart, for presuming to imagine, that I will

be controlled by the prospect of any benefits in their power to confer. There is not a person breathing, but yourself, who shall prescribe to me. Your whole conduct, madam, has been so nobly principled, and your resentments are so admirably just, that you appear to me even in a divine light; and in an infinitely more amiable one at the same time, than you could have appeared in, had you not suffered the barbarous wrongs, that now fill my mind with anguish and horror at my own recollected villainy to the most excellent of women.

I repeat, that all I beg for the present, is a few lines, to guide my doubtful steps: and (if possible for you so far to condescend) to encourage me to hope; that if I can justify my present vows by my future conduct, I may be permitted the honour to style myself

Eternally yours,
R. LOVELACE.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Lord M. and to the Ladies of his House.

[In reply to Miss Montague's of Aug. 7.]

Tuesday, Aug. 7.

EXCUSE me, my good lord, and my ever-honoured ladies, from accepting of your noble quarterly bounty; and allow me to return, with all grateful acknowledgement, and true humility, the inclosed earnest of your goodness to me. Indeed I have no need of the one, and cannot possibly want the other: but nevertheless, I have such a sense of your generous favour, that to my last hour I shall have pleasure in contemplating upon it, and be proud of the place I hold in the esteem of such venerable persons, to whom I once had the ambition to hope to be related.

Your resentments on my account are extremely generous, as your goodness to me is truly noble; but I am not without hope, that your nephew will be properly affected by the evils he has made me suffer; and that, when I am laid low and forgotten, your whole honourable family will be enabled to rejoice in his reformation; and see many of those happy years together, which my good lord, and my dear ladies, you so kindly wish to

Your ever grateful and obliged

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Mr. Belford to Robert Lovelace, Esq.

Thursday night, Aug. 10.

I BEGIN to pity thee heartily, now I see thee in earnest, in the fruitless love thou exprestest to this angel of a woman; and the rather, as, say what thou wilt, it is impossible she should get over her illness, and her friends' implacableness, of which she has had fresh instances.

I hope thou art not indeed displeased with the extracts I have made from thy letters for her. The letting her know the justice thou hast done to her virtue in them, is so much in favour of thy ingenuousness (a quality, let me repeat, that gives thee a superiority over common libertines) that I think in my heart I was right; though to any other woman, and to one who had not known the worst of thee that she could know, it might have been wrong.

If the *end* will justify the *means*, it is plain, that I have done well with regard to ye both; since I have made *her* easier, and *thee* appear in a better light to her, than otherwise thou wouldst have done.

I will now briefly proceed to relate what has passed since my last, as to the excellent lady. By the account I shall give thee, thou wilt see, that she has troubles enough upon her, all springing originally from thyself, without needing to add more to them by new vexations.

My last was dated on Saturday.

On Sunday; in compliance with her doctor's advice she took a little airing. Mrs. Lovick, and Mr. Smith and his wife, were with her. After being at Highgate Chapel at divine service, she treated them with a little repast; and in the afternoon was at Islington Church, in her way home; returning tolerably cheerful.

She had received several letters in my absence, as Mrs. Lovick acquainted me, besides yours. Yours, it seems, much distressed her; but she ordered the messenger, who pressed for an answer, to be told, that it did not require an immediate one.

On Wednesday, she received a letter from her uncle Harlowe, in answer to one she had written to her mother on Saturday on her knees. It must be a very cruel one, Mrs. Lovick says, by the effects it had upon her: for, when she received it, she was intending to take an afternoon airing in a coach, but was she thrown into so violent a fit of hysterics upon it, that she was forced to lie down; and (being not recovered by it) to go to bed about eight o'clock.

On Thursday morning she was up very early; and had recourse to the scriptures to calm her mind as she told Mrs. Lovick: and, weak as she was, would go in a chair to Lincoln's-inn Chapel, about eleven. She was brought home a little better; and then sat down to write to her uncle. But was obliged to

leave off several times—to struggle, as she told Mrs. Lovick, for an humble temper. “My heart,” said she to the good woman, “is a proud heart, and not yet, I find, enough mortified to my condition; but, do what I can, will be for prescribing resenting things to my pen.”

I arrived in town from Belton’s this Thursday evening, and went directly to Smith’s. She was too ill to receive my visit. But on sending my compliments she sent me down word, that she should be glad to see me in the morning.

Miss Cl. Harlowe to Robert Lovelace, Esq.

Friday, Aug. 11.

It is a cruel alternative, to be either forced to see you, or to write to you. But a will of my own has been long denied me; and to avoid a greater evil, nay, now I may say, the greatest, I write.

Were I capable of disguising or concealing my real sentiments, I might safely, I dare say, give you the remote hope you request, and yet keep all my resolutions. But I must tell you, sir, (it becomes my character to tell you), that, were I to live more years than perhaps I may weeks, and there were not another man in the world, I could not, I would not be yours.

There is no *merit* in performing a *duty*.

Religion enjoins me, not only to forgive injuries, but to return good for evil. It is all my consolation, and I bless God for giving me that, that I am now in such a state of mind with regard to you, that I can cheerfully obey its dictates. And accordingly I tell you, that, wherever you go, I wish you happy. And in this I mean to include every good wish.

And now having, with great reluctance I own, complied with one of your compulsory alternatives, I expect the fruits of it.

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Mr. John Harlowe to Miss Cl. Harlowe.

[In answer to hers to her mother.]

Monday, Aug. 7.

POOR UNGRATEFUL NAUGHTY KINSWOMAN,

YOUR mother neither caring, nor being *permitted* to write, I am desired to set pen to paper, though I had resolved against it.

And so I am to tell you, that your letters, joined to the occasion of them, almost break the hearts of us all.

Were we sure you had seen your folly, and were *truly* penitent and, at the same time, that you were so very ill as you pretend, I know not what might be done for you. But we are all acquainted with your moving ways, when you want to carry a point.

Naughty, naughty girl! You see the fruits of preferring a rake and libertine to a man of sobriety and morals. Against full warning, against better knowledge. And such a modest creature too, as you were! How could you think of such an unworthy preference!

Your mother *can't* ask, and your sister knows not in modesty *how* to ask; and so *I* ask you, If you have any reason to think yourself with child by this villain?—You *must* answer this, and answer it truly, before any thing can be resolved upon about you.

You may well be touched with a deep remorse for your misdeeds. Could I ever have thought that my doating-piece, as every one called you, would have done thus? To be sure I loved you too well. But that is over now. Yet, though I will not pretend to answer for any body but myself, for my own part I say, God forgive you! And this is all from

Your afflicted uncle,

JOHN HARLOWE.

Miss Cl. Harlowe to John Harlowe, Esq.

Thursday, Aug. 10.

HONOURED SIR,

IT was an act of charity I begged: only for a last blessing, that I might die in peace. I ask not to be received again, as my severe sister is pleased to say, is my view. Let that grace be denied me when I do.

I could not look forward to my last scene with comfort, without seeking, at least, to obtain the blessing I petitioned for; and that with a contrition so deep, that I deserved not, were it known, to be turned over from the tender nature of a mother, to the upbraiding pen of an uncle! and to be wounded by a cruel question, put by him in a shocking manner; and which a little, a very little time, will better answer than I can: for I am not either a hardened or shameless creature: if I were, I should not have been so solicitous to obtain the favour I sued for.

And permit me to say, that I asked it as well for my father and mother's sake, as for my own; for I am sure, *they* at least will be uneasy, after I am gone, that they refused it to me.

I should still be glad to have theirs and yours, sir, and all your blessings, and your prayers: but denied in such a manner, I will not presume again to ask it: relying entirely on the Almighty's;

which is never denied, when supplicated for with such true penitence as I hope mine is.

God preserve my dear uncle, and all my honoured friends prays

Your unhappy
CLARISSA HARLOWE

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

Saturday, Aug. 12.

I DON'T know what the devil ails me; but I never was so much indisposed in my life. At first, I thought some of my blessed relations here had got a dose administered to me, in order to get the whole house to themselves. But, as I am the hopes of the family, I believe they would not be so wicked.

I must lay down my pen. I cannot write with any spirit at all. What a plague can be the matter with me!

* * * *

Lord M. paid me just now a cursed gloomy visit, to ask how I do after bleeding. His sisters both drove away yesterday, God be thanked. But they asked not my leave; and hardly bid me good-bye. My lord was more tender, and more dutiful than I expected. Men are less unforgiving than women. I have reason to say so, I am sure. For besides implacable Miss Harlowe, and the old ladies, the two Montague apes han't been near me yet.

* * * *

Neither eat, drink, nor sleep!—A piteous case, Jack! if I should die like a fool now, people would say Miss Harlowe had broken my heart.—That she *vexes* me to the heart, is certain.

Confounded squeamish! I would fain write it off. But must lay down my pen again. It won't do. Poor Lovelace!—what a devil ails thee?

* * * *

A visit from the Montague sisters, led in by the hobbling peer, to congratulate my amendment and reformation both in one. What a lucky event this illness; for we were all to pieces before! Thus, when a boy, have I joined with a crowd coming out of church, and have been thought to have been there myself.

My beloved mistakes me, if she thinks I proposed her writing to me, as an alternative that should dispense with my attendance upon her. That it shall *not* do, nor did I intend it should, unless she had pleased me better in the contents of her letter than she has done. Bid her read again. I gave no such hopes. I would have been with her in spite of you both, by to-morrow, at farthest had I not been laid by the heels thus, like a helpless miscreant.

But I grow better and better every hour, *I* say: the *doctor* says not: but I am sure I know best: and I will soon be in London, depend on't. But say nothing of this to my dear, cruel, and implacable Miss Harlowe.

A-dieu-u Ja-a-ack—What a gaping puppy (Yaw-n! yaw-n! yaw-n!!)

Thy
LOVELACE.

Mr. Belford to Miss Clarissa Harlowe.

MADAM,

Sat. morn. Aug. 19.

I THINK myself obliged in honour to acquaint you, that I am afraid Mr. Lovelace will try his fate by an interview with you.

I wish to heaven you could prevail upon yourself to receive his visit. All that is respectful, even to veneration, and all that is penitent, will you see in his behaviour, if you can admit of it. But as I am obliged to set out directly for Epsom, (to perform, as I apprehend, the last friendly offices for poor Mr. Belton, whom you once saw) and as I think it more likely that Mr. Lovelace will *not* be prevailed upon than that he *will*, I thought fit to give you this intimation, lest, if he should come, you should be too much surprised.

I beg you will not too much hurry and discompose yourself. It is impossible he can be in town till Monday at soonest. And if he resolves to come, I hope to be at Mr. Smith's before him.

I am, Madam, with the profoundest veneration,

Your most faithful and most obedient servant,

J. BELFORD.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

London, Aug. 21, Monday.

I BELIEVE I am bound to curse thee, Jack. Nevertheless I won't anticipate, but proceed to write thee a longer letter, than thou hast had from me for some time past. So here goes.

That thou mightest have as little notice as possible of the time I was resolved to be in town, I set out in my lord's chariot and six yesterday, as soon as I had dispatched my letter to thee, and arrived in town last night for I knew I could have no dependence on thy friendship where Miss Harlowe's humour was concerned.

I had no other place so ready, and so was forced to go to my old lodgings, where also my wardrobe is; and there I poured out millions of curses upon the whole crew, and refused to see either

Sally or Polly; and this not only for suffering the lady to escape, but for the villainous arrest, and for their detestable insolence to her at the officer's house.

I dressed myself in a never-worn suit, which I had intended for one of my wedding suits; and liked myself so well, that I began to think with thee that my outside was the best of me.

I took a chair to Smith's, my heart bounding in almost audible thumps to my throat, with the assured expectation of seeing my beloved. I clasped my fingers as I was danced along: I charged my eyes to languish and sparkle by turns: I talked to my knees, telling them how they must bend; and in the language of a charming describer, acted my part in fancy, as well as spoke it to myself:

Tenderly kneeling, *thus* will I complain:
Thus court her pity, and *thus* plead my pain;
Thus sigh for fancy'd frowns, if frowns should rise;
 And *thus* meet favour in her softening eyes.

In this manner entertained I myself, till I arrived at Smith's. and there the fellows set down their gay burden. Off went their hats; Will ready at hand in a new livery; up went the head; out rushed my honour; the woman behind the compter all in flutters, respect and fear giving due solemnity to her features; and her knees, I doubt not, knocking against the inside of her wainscot fence.

Your servant, madam—Will, let the fellows move to some distance, and wait.

You have a young lady lodges here; Miss Harlowe, madam; is she above?

Sir, sir, an' please your honour [the woman is struck with my figure, thought I]! Miss Harlowe, sir! There is indeed, such a young lady lodges here—But, but—

But what, madam?—I must see her.—One pair of stairs! is it not?—Don't trouble yourself—I shall find her apartment. And was making towards the stairs.

Sir, sir, the lady, the lady is not at home—she is abroad—she is in the country—

In the country! not at home!—Impossible. You will not pass this story upon me, good woman. I *must* see her. I have business of life and death with her.

Indeed, sir, the lady is not at home! Indeed, sir, she is abroad!—

She then rung a bell; John, cried she, pray step down!—Indeed, sir, the lady is not at home.

Down came John, the good man of the house, when I expected one of his journeymen, by her saucy familiarity.

My dear, said she, the gentleman will not believe Miss Harlowe is abroad.

John bowed to my fine clothes: Your servant, sir—indeed the lady is abroad. She went out of town this morning by six o'clock—into the country—By the doctor's advice.

Still I would not believe either John or his wife. I am sure, said I, she cannot be abroad, I heard she was very ill—she is not able to go out in a coach.

Where is her servant? Call her servant to me.

Her servant, sir, is her nurse: she has no other. And *she* is gone with her.

Well, friend, I must not believe you. You'll excuse me; but I must go up stairs myself. And was stepping up.

John hereupon put on a serious, and a less respectful face—Sir, this house is mine; and—

And what, friend? not doubting then but she was above. I must and will see her. I have authority for it. I am a justice of peace. I have a search-warrant.

And up I went; they following me, muttering, and in a plaguy flutter.

The first door I came to was locked. I tapped at it.

The lady, sir, has the key of her own apartment.

On the inside I question not, my honest friend; tapping again. And being assured, if she heard my voice, that her timorous and soft temper would make her betray herself by some flutters, to my listening ear, I said aloud, I am confident Miss Harlowe is here; dearest madam, open the door: admit me, but for one moment to your presence.

But neither answer nor fluttering saluted my ear; and the people being very quiet, I led on to the next apartment; and the key being on the outside, I opened it, and looked all round it, and into the closet.

The man said he never saw so uncivil a gentleman in his life.

Hark thee, friend, said I; let me advise thee to be a little decent; or I shall teach thee a lesson thou never learnedst in all thy life.

I stepped back to the locked door: My dear Miss Harlowe, I beg of you to open the door, or I'll break it open;—pushing hard against it, that it cracked again.

The man looked pale: and trembling with his fright, made a plaguy long face; and called to one of his boddice-makers above, *Joseph, come down quickly.*

Joseph came down, a lion's-face grinning fellow; thick and short, and bushy-headed like an old oak-pollard. Then did master John put on a sturdier look. But I only hummed a tune, traversed all the other apartments, sounded the passages with my knuckles,

to find whether there were private doors, and walked up the next pair of stairs singing all the way ; John and Joseph, and Mrs. Smith, following me trembling.

I looked round me there, and went into two open-door bed-chambers ; searched the closets, the passages, and peeped through the key-hole of another : No Miss Harlowe, by Jupiter ! What shall I do !—What shall I do ! as the girls say.—Now will she be grieved that she is out of the way.

I said this on purpose to find out whether these people knew the lady's story : and had the answer I expected from Mrs. Smith—I believe not, sir.

Why so, Mrs. Smith ? Do you know who I am ?

I can guess, sir.

Whom do you guess me to be ?

Your name is Mr. Lovelace, sir, I make no doubt.

The very same. But how came you to guess so well, dame Smith ! You never saw me before—did you !

Here, Jack, I laid out for a compliment, and missed it.

'Tis easy to guess, sir ; for there cannot be two such gentlemen as you.

Well said, dame Smith—but mean you *good* or *bad* ?—*Handsome* was the least I thought she would have said.

I leave you to guess, sir.

Condemned, thought I, by myself, on this appeal.

Why, father Smith, thy wife is a wit, man ?—Did'st thou ever find that out before ?—But where is widow Lovick, dame Smith ? My cousin John Belford says she is a very good woman. Is she within ? Or is she gone with Miss Harlowe too ?

She will be within by-and-by, sir. She is not with the lady.

Well, but my good, dear Mrs. Smith, whither is the lady gone ? And when will she return ?

I can't tell, sir.

Don't tell fibs, dame Smith ; don't tell fibs, chucking her under the chin : which made John's upper lip, with chin shortened, rise to his nose.—I am sure you know !—But here's another pair of stairs : let us see ; who lives up there ? But hold, here's another room locked up, tapping at the door—Who's at home ? cried I.

That's Mrs. Lovick's apartment, she is gone out, and has the key with her.

Widow Lovick ! tapping again, I believe you are at home : pray open the door.

John and Joseph muttered and whispered together.

No whispering, honest friends : 'tis not manners to whisper. Joseph, what said John to thee ?

Sir said the good man, I wish you'd walk down. The ser

vants' rooms, and the working rooms, are up those stairs, and another pair; and nobody's there that you want.

Shall I go up and see if Miss Harlowe be there, Mrs. Smith?

You may, sir, if you please.

Then I won't go; for, if she was, you would not be so obliging.

I am ashamed to give you all this attendance: you are the politest traders I ever knew. Honest Joseph, slapping him upon the shoulder on a sudden, which made him jump, didst ever grin for a wager, man? For the rascal seemed not displeased with me; and, cracking his flat face from ear to ear, with a distended mouth, shewed his teeth, as broad and as black as his thumb nails.—But don't I hinder thee? What canst earn a day, man?

Half a crown, I can earn a day! with an air of pride and petulance, at being startled.

There, then, is a day's wages for thee. But thou needest not attend me farther.

Come, Mrs. Smith, come John, (Master Smith, I should say) let's walk down, and give me an account where the lady is gone, and when she will return.

So down stairs led I, John and Joseph (though I had discharged the latter) and my dame following me, to shew their complaisance to a stranger.

I intend to regulate my motions by Will's intelligence; for see this dear creature I must and will. Yet I have promised Lord M. to be down in two or three days, at farthest; for he is grown plaguy fond of me since I was ill.

I am in hopes, that the word I left, that I am to go out of town to-morrow morning, will soon bring the lady back again.

Meantime I thought I would write to divert thee, while thou art of such importance about the dying; and as thy servant, it seems, comes backward and forward every day, perhaps I may send thee another letter to-morrow, with the particulars of the interview between the dear creature and me, after which my soul thirsteth.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

CURSE upon my stars!—Disappointed again! It was about eight when I arrived at Smith's. The woman was in the shop.

So, old acquaintance, how do you do now? I know my love is above.—Let her be acquainted that I am here, waiting for admission to her presence, and can take no denial. Tell her, that I will approach her with the most respectful duty, and in whose company she pleases: and I will not touch the hem of her garment, without her leave.

Indeed, sir, you are mistaken. The lady is not in this house, nor near it.

I'll see that.—Will! beckoning him to me, and whispering, see if thou canst any way find out (without losing sight of the door, lest she should be below stairs) if she be in the neighbourhood, if not within.

Will bowed, and went off. Up went I without further ceremony, attended now only by the good woman.

I went into each apartment, except that which was locked before, and was now also locked; and I called to my Clarissa in the voice of love; but by the still silence was convinced she was not there. Yet on the strength of my intelligence, I doubted not but she was in the house.

I then went up two pair of stairs, and looked round the first room: but no Miss Harlowe.

Tell me of a truth, good Mrs. Lovick, where I may see this dear lady. Upon my soul, I will neither fright nor offend her. I will only beg of her to hear me speak for one half-quarter of an hour; and, if she will have it so, I will never trouble her more.

Sir, said the widow, it would be death for her to see you. She was at home last night; I'll tell you truth: but fitter to be in bed all day. She came home, she said, to die: and if she could not avoid your visit, she was unable to fly from you; and believed she should die in your presence.

And yet go out again this morning early! How can that be, widow?

Why, sir, she rested not two hours, for fear of you. Her fear gave her strength, which she'll suffer for, when that fear is over. And finding herself, the more she thought of your visit, the less able to stay to receive it, she took chair, and is gone nobody knows whither. But, I believe, she intended to be carried to the water-side, in order to take boat; for she cannot bear a coach. It extremely incommoded her yesterday.

But before we talk any further, said I, if she be gone abroad, you can have no objection to my looking into every apartment above and below; because I am told she is actually in the house.

Indeed, sir, she *is not*. You may satisfy yourself, if you please; but Mrs. Smith and I waited on her to her chair. We were forced to support her, she was so weak. She said, Whither *can* I go, Mrs. Lovick? whither *can* I go, Mrs. Smith?—Cruel, cruel man!—Tell him I called him so, if he come again! God give him that peace which he denies me!

Sweet creature! cried I, and looked down, and took out my handkerchief.

The widow wept. I wish, said she, I had never known so excellent a lady, and so great a sufferer! I love her as my own child!

Mrs. Smith wept.

I then gave over the hope of seeing her for this time. I was extremely chagrined at my disappointment, and at the account they gave of her ill health.

I took leave of them, and went down; and stepping into my chair, caused myself to be carried to Lincoln's Inn; and walked in the gardens till chapel was opened; and then I went in and stayed prayers, in hopes of seeing the dear creature enter: but to no purpose; and yet I prayed most devoutly that she might be conducted thither, either by my good angel or her own. And indeed I burn more than ever with impatience to be once more permitted to kneel at the feet of this adorable woman.

After service was over I stept into my chair again, and once more was carried to Smith's, in hopes I might have surprised her there: but no such happiness for thy friend. I staid in the back-shop an hour and an half by my watch: and again underwent a good deal of preachment from the women. John was mainly civil to me now; won over a little by my serious talk, and the honour I professed for the lady. They all three wished matters could be made up between us: but still insisted that she could never get over her illness, and that her heart was broken. A cue, I suppose, they had from you.

While I was there, a letter was brought by a particular hand. They seemed very solicitous to hide it from me; which made me suspect it was for her. I desired to be suffered to cast an eye upon the seal, and the superscription: promising to give it back to them unopened.

Looking upon it, I told them I knew the hand and seal. It was from her sister. And I hoped it would bring her news that she would be pleased with.

They joined most heartily in the same hope: and giving the letter to them again, I civilly took my leave, and went away.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

Wednesday morn. Aug. 23.

ALL alive, dear Jack, and in ecstasy—likely to be once more a happy man! For I have received a letter from my beloved Miss HARLOWE; in consequence, I suppose, of that which I mentioned in my last to be left for her from her sister. And I am setting out for Berks directly, to shew the contents to my Lord M. and to receive the congratulations of all my kindred upon it.

I went last night, as I intended, to Smith's: but the dear creature was not returned at near ten o'clock.

TO ROBERT LOVELACE, ESQ.

SIR, *Tuesday night, 11 o'clock (Aug. 22.)*

I HAVE good news to tell you. I am setting out with all diligence for my father's house. I am bid to hope that he will receive his poor penitent with a goodness peculiar to himself; for I am overjoyed with the assurance of a thorough reconciliation, through the interposition of a dear blessed friend, whom I always loved and honoured. I am so taken up with my preparation for this joyful and long wished for journey, that I cannot spare one moment for any other business, having several matters of the last importance to settle first. So, pray, sir, don't disturb or interrupt me—I beseech you, don't. You may possibly in time see me at my father's; at least if it be not your own fault.

I will write a letter, which shall be sent you when I am got thither and received: till when, I am, &c.

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

I dispatched instantly a letter to the dear creature, assuring her, with the most thankful joy, “That I would directly set out for Berks, and wait the issue of the happy reconciliation, and the charming hopes she had filled me with. I poured out upon her a thousand blessings. I declared that it should be the study of my whole life to merit such transcendent goodness: and that there was nothing which her father or friends should require at my hands, that I would not for *her* sake comply with, in order to promote and complete so desirable a reconciliation.”

I hurried it away without taking a copy of it; and I have ordered the chariot-and-six to be got ready; and hey for M. Hall!

*Mr. Belford to Robert Lovelace, Esq.**Sat. Aug. 26.*

I WAS at Smith's by seven yesterday (Friday) morning; and found that the lady was just gone in a chair to St. Dunstan's to prayers; she was too ill to get out by six to Covent-Garden church; and was forced to be supported to her chair by Mrs. Lovick. They would have persuaded her against going; but she said she knew not but that it might be her last opportunity. Mrs. Lovick, dreading that she would be taken worse at church, walked thither before her.

Mrs. Smith told me, she was so ill on Wednesday night, that she had desired to receive the sacrament; and accordingly it was administered to her by the parson of the parish whom she be-

sought to take all opportunities of assisting her in her solemn preparation.

This the gentleman promised: and called in the morning to inquire after her health; and was admitted at the first word. He staid with her about half an hour; and when he came down, with his face turned aside, and a faltering accent, "Mrs. Smith," said he, "you have an angel in your house.—I will attend her again in the evening, as she desires, and as often as I think it will be agreeable to her."

Her increased weakness she attributed to the fatigues she had undergone by your means; and to a letter she had received from her sister, which she answered the same day.

Mrs. Smith told me, that two different persons had called there, one on Thursday morning, one in the evening, to inquire after her state of health; and seemed as if commissioned from her relations for that purpose; but asked not to see her, only were very inquisitive after her visitors, (particularly, it seems, after *me*: what could they mean by that?) after her way of life, and expenses; and one of them inquired after her manner of supporting them; to the latter of which, Mrs. Smith said, she had answered, as the truth was, that she had been obliged to sell some of her clothes, and was actually about parting with more; at which the inquirist (a grave old farmer-looking man) held up his hands, and said, Good God! this will be sad, sad news to somebody! I believe I must not mention it. But Mrs. Smith says, she desired he *would*, let him come from whom he would. He shook his head, and said, If she died, the flower of the world would be gone, and the family she belonged to, would be no more than a common family.* I was pleased with the man's expression.

* * * *

On Wednesday morning, when she received your letter in answer to hers, she said, Necessity may well be called the mother of invention—but calamity is the test of integrity.—I hope I have not taken an inexcusable step—and there she stopt a minute or two; and then said, I shall now, perhaps, be allowed to die in peace.

I staid till she came in. She was glad to see me: but, being very weak, said, she must sit down before she could go up stairs: and went into the back-shop: leaning upon Mrs. Lovick; and when she had sat down, "I am glad to see you, Mr. Belford, said she I *must* say so—let mis-reporters say what they will."

I wondered at this expression; but would not interrupt her.

Oh! sir, said she, I have been grievously harassed. Your friend, who would not let me live with reputation, will not permit

* This man came from her cousin Morden; as will be seen hereafter.

me to die in peace. You see how I am. Is there not a great alteration in me within this week? But 'tis all for the better. Yet were I to wish for life, I must say, that your friend, your barbarous friend, has *hurt* me greatly.

She was so very weak, so short-breathed, and her words and actions so very moving, that I was forced to walk from her: the two women and her nurse turning away their faces also weeping.

A letter and packet were brought her by a man on horseback from Miss Howe, while we were talking. She retired up stairs to read it; and while I was in discourse with Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Lovick, the doctor and apothecary both came in together. They confirmed to me my fears, as to the dangerous way she is in. They had both been apprised of the new instances of implacableness in her friends, and of your persecutions: and the doctor said, he would not for the world be either the unforgiving father of that lady, or the man who had brought her to this distress. Her heart's broken: she'll die, said he: there is no saving her. But how, were I either the one or the other of the people I have named, I should support myself afterwards I cannot tell.

When she was told we were all three together, she desired us to walk up. She arose to receive us, and after answering two or three general questions relating to her health, she addressed herself to us, to the following effect:

As I may not, said she, see you three gentlemen together again, let me take this opportunity to acknowledge my obligations to you all. I am inexpressibly obliged to you, sir, and to you, sir, [court-seying to the doctor and to Mr. Goddard], for your *more* than friendly, your *paternal* care and concern for me. Humanity in your profession, I dare say, is far from being a rare qualification, because you are gentlemen *by* your profession: but so much kindness, so much humanity, did never desolate creature meet with, as I have met with from you both. But, indeed, I have always observed, that where a person relies upon Providence, it never fails to raise up a new friend for every old one that falls off.

This gentleman [bowing to me] who, some people think, should have been one of the last I should have thought of for my executor—is nevertheless (such is the strange turn that things have taken!) the only one I can choose; and therefore I have chosen him for that charitable office, and he has been so good as to accept of it: for, rich as I may boast myself to be, I am rather so in *right*, than in *fact*, at this present. I repeat therefore my humble thanks to you all three, and beg of God to return to you and yours [looking to each] an hundredfold, the kindness and favour you have shewn me; and that it may be in the power of you and of yours, to the end of time, to *confer* benefits, rather than to be obliged to *receive* them. This is a godlike power, gentlemen: I once rejoiced in it

in some little degree; and much more in the prospect I had of its being enlarged to me; though I have had the mortification to experience the reverse, and to be obliged almost to every body I have seen or met with:—but all, originally, through my own fault so I ought to bear the punishment without repining; and I hope I do.—Forgive these impertinencies: a grateful heart that wants the power it wishes for, to express itself suitably to its own impulses, will be at a loss what properly to dictate to the tongue: and yet, unable to restrain its overflowings, will force the tongue to say weak and silly things, rather than appear ungratefully silent. Once more then, I thank you all three for your kindness to me: and God Almighty make you that amends which at present I cannot.

She retired from us to her closet with her eyes full; and left us looking upon one another.

We had hardly recovered ourselves, when she, quite easy, cheerful, and smiling, returned to us. Doctor, said she (seeing we had been moved), you will excuse me for the concern I give you; and so will you, Mr. Goddard, and you, Mr. Belford; for 'tis a concern that only generous natures can shew; and to such natures *sweet* is the pain, if I may so say, that attends such a concern. But as I have some few preparations still to make, and would not (though in case of Mr. Belford's future cares, which is, and ought to be, part of my study) undertake more than it is likely I shall have time lent me to perform, I would beg of you to give me your opinions [you see my way of living; and you may be assured, that I will do nothing wilfully to shorten my life] how long it may possibly be, before I may hope to be released from all my troubles.

They both hesitated, and looked upon each other.

How long, doctor?—I believe I *shall* have a little more ruffling—I am afraid I shall—but there can happen only one thing that I shall not be tolerably easy under—how long then, sir?—

He was silent.

A fortnight, sir?

He was still silent.

Ten days?—A week?—How long, sir? with smiling earnestness.

If I *must* speak, madam, if you have not better treatment than you have lately met with, I am afraid—there again he stopt.

Afraid of what, doctor? Don't be afraid—how long, sir?

That a fortnight or three weeks may deprive the world of the finest flower in it.

A fortnight or three weeks yet, doctor?—But God's will be done! I shall, however, by this means, have full time, if I have but strength and intellect, to do all that is now upon my mind to do.

She then retired, with a cheerful and serene air. The two gentlemen went away together. I went down to the women, and

inquiring, found, that Mrs. Lovick was this day to bring her twenty guineas more, for some of her apparel.

Mrs. Lovick tells me, that the lady spoke of a letter she had received from her favourite divine Dr. Lewen, in the time of my absence; and of an answer she had returned to it. But Mrs. Lovick knows not the contents of either.

When thou receivest the letter I am now writing, thou wilt see what will soon be the end of all thy injuries to this divine lady. I say, *when thou receivest it*; for I will delay it for some little time, lest thou shouldest take into thy head (under pretence of resenting the disappointment her letter must give thee) to molest her again.

I should have mentioned, that the lady explained to me what the *one thing* was, that she was afraid might happen to ruffle her. It was the apprehension of what may result from a visit which Col. Morden, as she is informed, designs to make *you*.

Miss Arab. Harlowe to Miss Cl. Harlowe.

SISTER CLARY,

Monday, Aug. 21.

I FIND, by your letters to my uncles,* that they, as well as I, are in great disgrace with you for writing our minds to you.

We can't help it, sister Clary.

You don't think it worth your while, I find, a second time to press for the blessing you pretend to be so earnest about. You think, no doubt, that you have done your duty in asking for it; so you'll sit down satisfied with that, I suppose, and leave it to your wounded parents to repent hereafter that they have not done *theirs*, in giving it you, at the *first* word: and in making such inquiries about you, as you think ought to have been made. Fine encouragement to inquire after a run-away daughter! living with her fellow, as long as he would live with her! You repent also (with your *full mind*, as you modestly call it) that you wrote to me.

So we are not likely to be applied to any more, I find, in this way.

Well then, since this is the case, sister Clary, let me, *with all humility*, address myself with a proposal or two to you; to which you will be *graciously* pleased to give an answer.

Now you must know that we have had hints given us, from several quarters, that you have been used in such a manner by the villain you ran away with, that his life would be answerable for his crime, if it were fairly to be proved. And by your own hints, something like it appears to us.

If, Clary, there be any thing but jingle and affected period in what proceeds from your *full mind*, and your *dutiful conscious-*

* She had received and answered insulting letters from both her uncles.—Ed

ness; and if there be truth in what Mrs. Norton and Mrs. Howe have acquainted us with, you may yet justify your character to us, and to the world, in every thing but your scandalous elopement: and the law may reach the villain: and could we but bring him to the gallows, what a meritorious revenge would that be to our whole injured family, and to the innocents he has deluded, as well as the saving from ruin many others!

But by what Mrs. Howe intimates, this is not likely to be complied with; for it is what she hinted to you, it seems, by her lively daughter, but without effect; and then, again, possibly, you may not at present behave so prudently in some certain points, as to entitle yourself to public justice; which if true, the Lord have mercy upon you.

One word only more as to the above proposal:—your admirer, Dr. Lewen, is clear in his opinion that you should prosecute the villain.

But if you will not agree to this, I have another proposal to make to you, and that in the name of every one in the family; which is, that you will think of going to Pennsylvania to reside there for some few years till all is blown over: and, if it please God to spare you, and your unhappy parents, till they can be satisfied that you behave like a true and uniform penitent; at least till you are one-and-twenty; you may then come back to your own estate, or have the produce of it sent thither, as you shall choose. A period which my father fixes, because it is the *custom*; and because he thinks your *grandfather* should have fixed it; and because, let me add, you have fully proved, by your fine conduct, that you were not at years of discretion at *eighteen*. Poor doting, though good old man!—Your grandfather, he thought—but I would not be too severe.

Mr. Hartley has a widow sister at Pennsylvania, with whom he will undertake you may board, and who is a sober, sensible, well-read woman. And if you were once well there, it would rid your father and mother of a world of cares, and fears, and scandal; and I think is what you should wish for of all things.

These are what I had to communicate to you; and if you'll oblige me with an answer (which the hand that conveys this will call for on Wednesday morning) it will be very condescending.

ARABELLA HARLOWE.

Miss Cl. Harlowe to Miss Arab. Harlowe.

Tuesday, Aug. 22.

WRITE to me, my hard-hearted sister, in what manner you please, I shall always be thankful to you 'or your notice. But

(think what you will of me) I cannot see Mr. Ackland and the counsellor on such a business as you mention.

The Lord have mercy upon me indeed! For none else will.

Surely I am believed to be a creature past all shame, or it could not be thought of sending two *gentlemen* to me on such an errand.

Had my *mother* required of me (or would *modesty* have permitted *you* to inquire into) the particulars of my sad story, or had *Mrs. Norton* been directed to receive them from me, methinks it had been more fit; and I presume to think, that it would have been more in every one's character too, had they been required of me before such heavy judgment had been passed upon me, as has been passed.

I *know* that this is Dr. Lewen's opinion. He has been so good as to enforce it in a kind letter to me. I have answered his letter; and given such reasons as I hope will satisfy *him*. I could wish it were thought worth while to request of him a sight of my answer.

To your other proposal, of going to Pennsylvania; this is my answer—If nothing happen within a month which may full as effectually rid my parents and friends of that world of cares, and fears, and scandals, which you mention, and if I am *then* able to be carried on board a ship, I will cheerfully obey my father and mother, although I were sure to die in the passage. And if I may be forgiven for saying so (for indeed it proceeds not from a spirit of reprisal) you shall set over me, instead of my poor obliging, but really unculpable Hannah, your Betty Barnes; to whom I will be answerable for all my conduct. And I will make it worth her while to accompany me.

I am equally surprised and concerned at the hints which both you and my uncle Antony give of *new* points of misbehaviour in me!—What can be meant by them?

I will not tell you, Miss Harlowe, how much I am afflicted at your severity, and how much I suffer by it, and by your hard-hearted levity of style, because what I shall say may be construed into *jingle* and *period*, and because I know it is *intended*, very possibly for *kind* ends, to mortify me. All I will therefore say, is, that it does not lose its end, if that be it.

But, nevertheless, (divesting myself as much as possible of all resentment) I will only pray, that Heaven will give you, for *your own* sake, a kinder heart than at present you seem to have: since a kind heart, I am convinced, is a greater blessing to its possessor, than it can be to any other person. Under this conviction, I subscribe myself, my dear Bella,

Your ever-affectionate sister,

CL. HARLOWE.

Mrs. Norton to Miss Clarissa Harlowe.

Tuesday, Aug. 22.

MY DEAREST YOUNG LADY,

THE letters you sent me, I now return by the hand that brings you this.

It is impossible for me to express how much I have been affected by them, and by your last of the 17th. Indeed, my dear Miss Clary, you are very harshly used: indeed you are! and if you should be taken from us, what grief and what punishment are they not treasuring up against themselves in the heavy reflections which their rash censures and unforgiveness will occasion them.

The motives which incline them all to this severity, if well grounded, would authorize any severity they could express, and which, while they believe them to be so, both they and you are to be equally pitied.

They are owing to the information of that officious Mr. Brand, who has acquainted them (from some enemy of yours in the neighbourhood about you) that visits are made you, highly censurable, by a man of a free character, and an intimate of Mr. Lovelace, who is often in private with you; sometime twice or thrice a day.

Betty gives herself great liberties of speech upon this occasion, and your friends are too ready to believe, that things are not as they should be; which makes me wish, that, let the gentlemen's views be ever so honourable, you could entirely drop acquaintance with him.

Your cousin Morden has been among them. He is exceedingly concerned for your misfortunes; and as they will not believe Mr. Lovelace would marry you, he is determined to go to Lord M.'s, in order to inform himself from Mr. Lovelace's own mouth, whether he intends to do you that justice, or not.

He was extremely caressed by every one at his first arrival: but I am told there is some little coldness between them and him at present.

I was in hopes of getting a sight of this letter of Mr. Brand, (a rash officious man!) but it seems Mr. Morden had it given him yesterday to read, and he took it away with him.

God be your comfort, my dear Miss Clary! but indeed I am exceedingly disturbed at the thoughts of what may still be the issue of all these things.

I am, my beloved young lady,

Your most affectionate and faithful

JUDITH NORTON.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

Monday noon, Aug. 28.

WHAT is the meaning I hear nothing from thee? And why dost thou not let me into the grounds of the sudden reconciliation between my beloved and her friends, and the cause of the generous invitation which she gives me of attending her at her father's some time hence?

Thou must certainly have been let into the secret by this time; and I can tell thee, I shall be plaguy jealous if there be any one thing pass between my angel and thee, that is to be concealed from me. For either I am a principal in this cause, or I am nothing.

I have dispatched Will to know the reason of thy neglect.

But, let me whisper a word or two in thy ear. I begin to be afraid, after all, that this letter was a stratagem to get me out of town, and for nothing else: for, in the first place, Tourville, in a letter I received this morning, tells me, that the lady is actually very ill [I am sorry for it with all my soul!] This, thou'lt say, I may think a reason why she cannot *set out as yet*: but then I have heard, on the other hand, but last night, that the family is as implacable as ever; and my lord and I expect this very afternoon a visit from Colonel Morden; who undertakes, it seems, to question me as to my intention with regard to his cousin.

This convinces me, that if she *has* apprised her friends of my offers to her, they will not believe me to be in earnest, till they are assured that I am so from my own mouth. But then I understand, that the intended visit is an officiousness of Morden's own, without the desire of any of her friends.

Now, Jack, what can a man make of all this? My intelligence, as to the continuance of her family's implacableness, is not to be doubted; and yet when I read her letter, what can one say?—Surely, the dear little rogue will not lie!

Upon my soul, Jack, such is the veneration I have for this admirable woman, that I am shocked barely at putting the case—and so wilt thou, if thou respectest her as thou oughtest: for, thou knowest, that men and women, all the world over, form their opinions of one another, by each person's professions and known practices. In this lady, therefore, it would be as unpardonable to tell a wilful untruth, as it would be strange if I keep my word—in love cases, I mean; for as to the rest, I am an honest moral man, as all who know me can testify.

But Colonel Morden is come, and I must break off.

Mr. Belford to Robert Lovelace, Esq.

Monday night, Aug. 28.

I GOT to town this evening, and went directly to Smith's. I found Mrs. Lovick and Mrs. Smith in the back-shop, and I saw they had been both in tears. They rejoiced to see me, however; and told me, that the doctor and Mr. Goddard were but just gone; as was also the worthy clergyman, who often comes to pray by her; and all three were of opinion, that she would hardly live to see the entrance of another week. I was not so much surprised as grieved; for I had feared as much when I left her on Saturday.

I sent up my compliments; and she returned, that she would take it for a favour if I would call upon her in the morning, by eight o'clock. Mrs. Lovick told me, that she had fainted away on Saturday, while she was writing, as she had done likewise the day before; and having received benefit then by a little turn in a chair, she was carried abroad again. She returned somewhat better, and wrote till late; yet had a pretty good night; and went to Covent-Garden church in the morning: but came home so ill, that she was obliged to lie down.

She had a pretty good night, it seems; and this morning went in a chair to St. Dunstan's church.

The chairman told Mrs. Smith, that after prayers (for she did not return till between nine and ten) they carried her to a house in Fleet Street, whither they never waited on her before. And where dost think this was?—Why to an undertaker's! Good heaven! what a woman is this! She went into the back-shop, and talked with the master of it about half an hour, and came from him with great serenity; he waiting upon her to her chair with a respectful countenance, but full of curiosity and seriousness.

'Tis evident, that she then went to bespeak her *house* that she talked of—*As soon as you can*, sir, were her words to him as she got into the chair. Mrs. Smith told me this with the same surprise and grief that I heard it.

She was very ill in the afternoon, having got cold either at St. Dunstan's, or at chapel, and sent for the clergyman to pray by her and the women, unknown to her, sent both for Dr. H. and Mr. Goddard; who were just gone, as I told you, when I came to pay my respects to her this evening.

I long for to-morrow, that I may see her: and yet 'tis such a melancholy longing, as I never experienced, and know not how to describe.

Tuesday, August 29.

I was at Smith's at half an hour after seven. They told me that the lady was gone in a chair to St. Dunstan's; but was better

than she had been on either of the two preceding days; and that she said to Mrs. Lovick and Mrs. Smith, as she went into the chair, I have a good deal to answer for to you, my good friends, for my vapourish conversation of last night.

If, Mrs. Lovick, said she, smiling, I have no new matters to discompose me, I believe my spirits will hold out purely.

She returned immediately after prayers.

I told her I was sorry to hear she had been so ill since I had the honour to attend her; but rejoiced to find, that now she seemed a good deal better.

It will be sometimes better, and sometimes worse, replied she, with poor creatures, when they are balancing between life and death. But no more of these matters just now. I hope, sir, you'll breakfast with me. I was quite vapourish yesterday. I had a very bad spirit upon me. Had I not, Mrs. Smith? But I hope I shall be no more so. And to-day I am perfectly serene. This day rises upon me as if it would be a bright one.

She desired me to walk up, and invited Mr. Smith and his wife, and Mrs. Lovick also, to breakfast with her. I was better pleased with her liveliness than with her looks.

The good people retiring after breakfast, the following conversation passed between us:

Pray, sir, let me ask you, said she, if you think I may promise myself that I shall be no more molested by your friend?

I hesitated: for how could I answer for such a man?

What shall I do if he comes again?—You see how I am.—I cannot fly from him now.—If he has any pity left for the poor creature whom he has thus reduced, let him not come.—But have you heard from him lately? And will he come?

I hope not, madam. I have not heard from him since Thursday last, that he went out of town, rejoicing in the hopes your letter gave him of a reconciliation between your friends and you, and that he might in good time see you at your father's; and he is gone down to give all his friends joy of the news, and is in high spirits upon it.

Alas for me! I shall then surely have him come up to persecute me again! As soon as he discovers that that was only a stratagem to keep him away, he will come up; and who knows but even *now* he is upon the road? I thought I was so bad, that I should have been out of his and every body's way before now: for I expected not, that this contrivance would serve me above two or three days; and by this time he must have found out, that I am not so happy as to have any hope of a reconciliation with my family; and then he will come, if it be only in revenge for what he will think a deceit, but is not, I hope, a wicked one.

I believe I looked surprised, to hear her confess that her letter

was a stratagem only; for she said, You wonder, Mr. Belford, I observe, that I could be *guilty of such an artifice*. *I doubt it is not right*: it was done in a hurry of spirits. How could I see a man who had so mortally injured me; yet, pretending sorrow for his crimes, (and wanting to see me) could behave with so much shocking levity, as he did, to the honest people of the house? Yet 'tis strange too, that neither you nor he found out my meaning on perusal of my letter. You have seen what I wrote, no doubt?

I have, madam. And then I began to account for it as an *innocent* artifice.

Thus far, indeed, sir, it is *innocent*, that I meant him no hurt, and had a *right* to the effect I hoped for from it; and he had *none* to invade me. But have you, sir, that letter of his, in which he gives you (as I suppose he does) the copy of mine?

I have, madam, and pulled it out of my letter-case: but hesitating—Nay, sir, said she, be pleased to read my letter to yourself—I desire not to see *his*—and see if you can be longer a stranger to a meaning so obvious.

I read it to myself—Indeed, madam, I can find nothing but that you are going down to Harlowe Place, to be reconciled to your father, and other friends: and Mr. Lovelace presumed, that a letter from your sister, which he saw brought when he was at Mr. Smith's, gave you the welcome news of it.

She then explained all to me, and that, as I may, in six words—a *religious* meaning is couched under it, and that's the reason that neither you nor I could find it out.

“Read but for my *father's house, heaven*, said she, and for the interposition of my dear blessed friend, suppose the *mediation* of my *Saviour* (which I humbly rely upon); and all the rest of the letter will be accounted for.” I hope (repeated she) that it is a pardonable artifice. But I am afraid it is not strictly right.

I read it so, and stood astonished for a minute at her invention, her piety, her charity, and at thine and mine own stupidity, to be thus taken in.

And now, thou vile Lovelace, what hast thou to do (the lady all consistent with herself, and no hopes left for thee) but to hang, drown, or shoot thyself, for an outwitted boaster?

My surprise being a little over, she proceeded: As to the letter that came from my sister while your friend was here, you will *soon* see, sir, that it is the cruellest letter she ever wrote me.

And then she expressed a deep concern for what might be the consequence of Col. Morden's intended visit to you; and besought me, that if now, or at any time hereafter, I had opportunity to prevent any further mischief, without detriment or danger to myself, I would do it.

I assured her of the most particular attention to this and to all

her commands; and that in a manner so agreeable to her, that she invoked a blessing upon me for my goodness, as she called it, to a desolate creature, who suffered under the *worst of orphanage*; those were her words.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

Tuesday morning, Aug. 29.

Now, Jack, will I give thee an account of what passed on occasion of the visit made us by Col. Morden.

He came on horseback, attended by one servant; and Lord M. received him, as a relation of Miss Harlowe's, with the highest marks of civility and respect.

After some general talk of the times, and of the weather, and such nonsense as Englishmen generally make their introductory topics to conversation, the colonel addressed himself to Lord M. and to me, as follows:

I need not, my lord, and Mr. Lovelace, as you know the relation I bear to the Harlowe family, make any apology for entering upon a subject, which on account of that relation, you must think is the principal reason of the honour I have done myself in this visit.

Miss Harlowe, Miss Clarissa Harlowe's affair, said Lord M. with his usual forward bluntness. That, sir, is what you mean. She is, by all accounts, the most excellent woman in the world.

I am glad to hear that is your lordship's opinion of her. It is every one's.

It is not only my opinion, Col. Morden, (proceeded the prating peer) but it is the opinion of all my family: of my sisters, of my nieces, and of Mr. Lovelace himself.

Col. Would to heaven it had always been Mr. Lovelace's opinion of her!

Lovel. You have been out of England, colonel, a good many years. Perhaps you are not yet fully apprised of all the particulars of this case.

Col. I have been out of England, sir, about seven years. My cousin Clary was then about *twelve* years of age but never was there at *twenty* so discreet, so prudent, and so excellent a creature. All that knew her, or saw her, admired her. Mind and person, never did I see such promises of perfection in any young lady: and I am told, nor is it to be wondered at, that as she advanced to maturity, she more than justified and made good those promises.—Then as to fortune—what her father, what her uncles, and what I myself, intended to do for her, besides what her grandfather had done—there is not a finer fortune in the county.

Lovel. All this, colonel, and more than this, is Miss Clarissa Harlowe; and had it not been for the implacableness and violence of her family (all resolved to push her upon a match as unworthy of her, as hateful to her) she had still been happy.

The colonel, then in a very manly strain, set forth the wickedness of attempting a woman of virtue and character. He said that men had generally too many advantages from the weakness, credulity, and inexperience of the fair sex: that their early learning, which chiefly consisted in inflaming novels, and idle and improbable romances, contributed to enervate and weaken their minds: that his cousin, however, he was sure, was above the reach of common seduction, and not to be influenced to the rashness her parents accused her of, by weaker motives than *their* violence, and the most solemn promises on *my* part: but, nevertheless, *having* those motives, and her prudence (eminent as it was) being rather the effect of *constitution* than *experience*, (a fine advantage, however, he said, to ground an unblameable future life upon) she might not be apprehensive of bad designs in a man she loved: it was therefore, a very heinous thing to abuse the confidence of such a woman.

I know very well, colonel, interrupted I, all you would say. You will excuse me, I am sure, that I break in upon you, when you find it is to answer the end you drive at.

I own to you, then, that I have acted very unworthily by Miss Clarissa Harlowe; and I'll tell you further, that I heartily repent of my ingratitude and baseness to her. Nay, I will say *still* further, that I am so grossly culpable, *as to her*, that even to plead, that the abuses and affronts I daily received from her implacable relations, were in any manner a provocation to me to act vilely by her, would be a mean and low attempt to excuse myself—so low and so mean, that it would doubly condemn me. And if you can say worse, speak it.

He looked upon Lord M. and then upon me, two or three times. And my lord said, My nephew speaks what he thinks, I'll answer for him.

Lovel. I do, sir; and what can I say more? And what further, in your opinion, can be done?

Col. Done! sir? Why, sir, [in a haughty tone he spoke] I need not tell you that reparation follows repentance. And I hope you make no scruple of justifying your sincerity as to the one, by the other.

I hesitated (for I relished not the manner of his speech, and his haughty accent) as undetermined whether to take proper notice of it or not.

Col. Let me put this question to you, Mr. Lovelace: is it true,

as I have heard it is, that you would marry my cousin, if she would have you?—What say you, sir?—

This wound me up a peg higher.

Lovel. Some questions, as they may be put, imply *commands*, colonel. I would be glad to know how I am to take yours. And what is to be the end of your interrogatories?

Col. My questions are not meant by me as commands, Mr. Lovelace. The *end* is, to prevail upon a gentleman to act *like a gentleman*, and a man of honour.

Lovel. (briskly) And by what arguments, sir, do you propose to prevail upon me?

Col. By what arguments, sir, prevail upon a gentleman to act like a gentleman!—I am surprised at that question from Mr. Lovelace.

Lovel. Why so, sir?

Col. WHY so, sir! (*angrily*)—Let me—

Lovel. (interrupting) I don't choose, colonel, to be repeated upon in that accent.

Lord M. Come, come, gentlemen, I beg of you to be willing to understand one another. You young gentlemen are so warm—

Col. Not I, my lord—I am neither very young nor unduly warm. Your nephew, my lord, can make me be every thing he would have me to be.

Lovel. And that shall be, whatever you please to be, colonel.

Col. (fiercely) The choice be yours, Mr. Lovelace. Friend or foe! as you do or are willing to do justice to one of the finest women in the world.

Lord M. I guessed from both your characters what would be the case when you met. Let me interpose, gentlemen, and beg you but to understand one another. You *both shoot at one mark*; and if you are patient, will both *hit it*. Let me beg of you, colonel, to give no challenges—

Col. Challenges, my lord!—They are things I ever was readier to accept than to offer. But does your lordship think that a man, so nearly related as I have the honour to be to the most accomplished woman on earth—

Lord M. (interrupting) We all allow the excellencies of the lady—and we shall all take it as the greatest honour to be allied to her that can be conferred upon us.

Col. So you ought, my lord!—

A perfect *Chamont*! thought I.*

Lord M. So we ought, colonel! And so we *do*!—And pray let *every one* do as he ought!—and no *more* than he *ought*; and you, colonel, let me tell you, will not be so hasty

Lovel. But hold, my lord, let me say one thing; and that is, that I think a gentleman ought not to put up tamely one or two severe things that the colonel has said.

Lord M. What the devil canst thou mean? I thought all had been over. Why thou hast nothing to do, but to confirm to the colonel, that thou art willing to marry Miss Harlowe, if she will have thee.

Col. Mr. Lovelace will not scruple to say *that*, I suppose, notwithstanding all that has passed: but if you think, Mr. Lovelace, I have said any thing I should *not* have said, I suppose it is this, that the man who has shewn so little of the *thing* honour, to a defenceless unprotected woman, ought not to stand so nicely upon the *empty name* of it, with a man who is expostulating with him upon it. I am sorry to have cause to say this, Mr. Lovelace; but I would on the same occasion repeat it to a king upon his throne, and surrounded by all his guards.

Lord M. But what is all this, but more *sacks upon the mill?* more *coals upon the fire?* You have a mind to quarrel, both of you, I see that. Are you not willing, nephew, are you not *most* willing, to marry this lady, if she can be prevailed upon to have you?

Lovel. D—n me, my lord, if I'd marry an empress, upon such treatment as this.

Lord M. Why now, Bob, thou art more choleric than the colonel. It was *his* turn just now. And now you see he is cool, you are all gunpowder.

Lovel. I own the colonel has many advantages over me; but perhaps there is one advantage he has not if it were put to the trial.

Col. I came not hither, as I said before, to seek the occasion: but if it be offered me, I won't refuse it—and since we find we disturb my good Lord M., I'll take my leave, and will go home by the way of St. Alban's.

Lovel. I'll see you part of the way, with all my heart, colonel.

Col. I accept your civility very cheerfully, Mr. Lovelace.

Lord M. (*interposing again, as we were both for going out*) And what will this do, gentlemen? Suppose you kill one another, will the matter be bettered or worsted by that? Will the lady be made happier or unhappier, do you think, by either or both of your deaths? Your characters are too well known to make fresh instances of the courage of either needful. And I think, if the honour of the lady is your view, colonel, it can be no other way so effectually promoted as by marriage. And, sir, if *you* would use your interest with her, it is very probable that you may succeed, though nobody else can.

Lovel. I think, my lord, I have said all that a man can say,

(since what has passed cannot be recalled) and you see Col. Morden rises in proportion to my coolness, till it is necessary for me to assert myself, or even *he* would despise me.

Lord M. Let me ask you, colonel; have you any way, any method, that you think reasonable and honourable to propose, to bring about a reconciliation with the lady? That is what we all wish for. And I can tell you, sir, it is not a little owing to her family, and to their implacable usage of her, that her resentments are heightened against my nephew; who, however, has used her vilely; but is willing to repair her wrongs—

Lovel. Not, my lord, for the sake of her family; nor for this gentleman's haughty behaviour; but for *her own sake*, and in full sense of the wrongs I have done her.

Col. As to my haughty behaviour, as you call it, sir, I am mistaken if you would not have gone beyond it in the like case of a relation so meritorious, and so unworthily injured. And, sir, let me tell you, that if your motives are not love, honour, and justice, and if they have the least tincture of mean compassion for *her*, or of an uncheerful assent on *your part*, I am sure it will neither be desired or accepted by a person of my cousin's merit and sense, nor shall I wish that it should.

Lovel. Don't think, colonel, that I am meanly compounding off a debate, that I should as willingly go through with you as to eat or drink, if I have the occasion given me for it. but thus much I will tell you, that my lord, that Lady Sarah Sadleir, Lady Betty Lawrence, my two cousins Montague, and myself, have written to her in the most solemn and sincere manner, to offer her such terms as no one but herself would refuse, and this long enough before Col. Morden's arrival was dreamt of.

I then told him of my sincere offers of marriage: "I made no difficulty, I said, to own my apprehensions, that my unhappy behaviour to her had greatly affected her: but that it was the implacableness of her friends that had thrown her into despair, and given her a contempt for life." I told him, "that she had been so good, as to send me a letter to divert me from a visit my heart was set upon making her: a letter, on which I built great hopes, because she assured me in it, that she was *going to her father's*; and that *I might see her there, when she was received, if it were not my own fault.*"

Col. Is it possible? And were you, sir, thus earnest? And did she send you such a letter?

Lord M. confirmed both; and also, that, in obedience to her desire and that intimation, I had come down without the satisfaction I had proposed to myself in seeing her.

It is very true, colonel, said I; and I should have told you *this before*: but your heat made me decline it; for, as I said, it

had an appearance of meanly capitulating with you. An abjectness of heart, of which had I been capable, I should have despised *myself*, as much as I might have expected *you* would despise me.

The colonel made excuses for his warmth, on the score of his affection to his cousin.

My regard for her made me readily admit them ; and so a fresh bottle of Burgundy, and another of Champagne, being put upon the table, we sat down in good humour, after all this blustering, in order to enter closer into the particulars of the case : which I undertook, at both their desires, to do.

Meantime you will observe, that a bad cause gives a man great disadvantages : for I myself think, that the interrogatories put to me with so much spirit by the colonel, made me look cursedly mean : at the same time that it gave him a superiority which I know not how to allow to the best man in Europe. So that, literally speaking, as a *good man* would infer, guilt is its own punisher ; in that it makes the most lofty spirit look like the miscreant he is.

LOVELACE.

Mr. Belford to Robert Lovelace, Esq.

Thursday, 11 o'clock, Aug. 31.

I AM just come from the lady, whom I left cheerful and serene.

I read to her such parts of your letters as I *could* read to her ; and I thought it was a good test to distinguish the froth and whipt-syllabub in them, from the cream, in what one *could* and *could not* read to a woman of so fine a mind ; since four parts out of six of thy letters, which I thought entertaining as I read them to myself, appeared to me, when I would have read them to her, most abominable stuff, and gave me a very contemptible idea of thy talents, and of my own judgment.

She was far from rejoicing, as I had done, at the disappointment her letter gave you when explained.

She said, she meant only an innocent allegory, which might carry instruction and warning to you, when the meaning was taken, as well as answer her own hopes for the time. It was run off in a hurry. She afraid was it was not quite right in *her*. But hoped the end would excuse (if it could not justify) the means.

She was much pleased that the conference between you and Colonel Morden, after two or three such violent sallies, as I acquainted her you had had between you, ended so amicably ; and said she must absolutely depend upon the promise I had

given her, to use my utmost endeavours to prevent further mischief on her account.

She was pleased with the justice you did her character to her cousin.

She was glad to hear, that he had so kind an opinion of her and that he would write to her.

Thursday, three o'clock, Aug. 31.

On my re-visit to the lady, I found her almost as much a sufferer from joy, as she had sometimes been from grief: for she had just received a very kind letter from her cousin Morden; which she was so good as to communicate to me. As she had already begun to answer it, I begged leave to attend her in the evening, that I might not interrupt her in it.

The letter is a very tender one.

But, alas! all will be now too late. For the decree is certainly gone out—the world is unworthy of her.

Colonel Morden to Miss Cl. Harlowe.

Tuesday, Aug. 29.

I SHOULD not, my dearest cousin, have been a fortnight in England, without either doing myself the honour of waiting upon you in person, or of writing to you, if I had not been busying myself almost all the time in your service; in hopes of making my visit or letter still more acceptable to you—acceptable as I have reason to presume either will be, from the unquestionable love I ever bore you, and from the esteem you always honoured me with.

Little did I think, that so many days would have been required to effect my well-intended purpose, where there used to be a love so ardent on one side, and where there still is, as I am thoroughly convinced, the most exalted merit on the other!

I was yesterday with Mr. Lovelace and Lord M. I need not tell you, it seems, how very desirous the whole family and all the relations of that nobleman are of the honour of an alliance with you: nor how exceedingly earnest the ungrateful man is to make you all the reparation in his power.

I think, my dear cousin, that you cannot now do better than to give him the honour of your hand. He says such just and great things of your virtue, and so heartily condemns himself, that I think there is honourable room for you to forgive him: and the more room, as it seems you are determined against a legal prosecution.

Your effectual forgiveness of Mr. Lovelace, it is evident to me, will accelerate a general reconciliation : for at present, my other cousins cannot persuade themselves that he is in earnest to do you justice ; or that you would refuse him, if you believed he was.

But, my dear cousin, there may possibly be something in this affair to which I may be a stranger. If there be, and you will acquaint me with it, all that a *naturally* warm heart can do in your behalf, shall be done.

I hope I shall be able, in my next visits to my several cousins, to set all right with them. Haughty spirits, when convinced that they have carried resentments too high, want but a good excuse to condescend : and parents must *always* love the child they *once* loved.

But if I find them inflexible, I will set out, and attend you without delay ; for I long to see you, after so many years' absence.

Meanwhile, I beg the favour of few lines, to inform me if you have reason to doubt Mr. Lovelace's sincerity. For my part, I can have none, if I am to judge from the conversation that passed between us yesterday, in presence of Lord M.

You will be pleased to direct for me at your uncle Antony's.

Permit me, my dearest cousin, till I can procure a happy reconciliation between you and your father, and brother, and uncles, to supply the place to you of all those near relations, as well as that of

Your affectionate kinsman, and humble servant,

WM. MORDEN.

Miss Cl. Harlowe to Wm. Morden, Esq.

Thursday, Aug. 31.

I MOST heartily congratulate you, dear sir, on your return to your native country.

I heard with much pleasure that you were come ; but I was both afraid and ashamed, till you encouraged me by a first notice, to address myself to you.

How consoling is it to my wounded heart to find, that you have not been carried away by that tide of resentment and displeasure with which I have been so unhappily overwhelmed—but that, while my still nearer relations have not thought fit to examine into the truth of vile reports raised against me, you have informed yourself of my innocence, and generously *credited* the information !

I have not the least reason to doubt Mr. Lovelace's sincerity in his offers of marriage: nor that all his relations are heartily desirous of ranking me among them. I have had noble instances of their esteem for me, on their apprehending that my father's displeasure must have subjected me to difficulties: and this, after I had absolutely refused *their* pressing solicitations in their relation's favour, as well as *his own*.

Nor think me, my dear cousin, blameable for refusing him.

I can indeed forgive him. But that is, because I think his crimes have set me above him. Can I be above the man, sir, to whom I shall give my hand and my vows; and with them a sanction to the most premeditated baseness? No, sir! let me say, that your cousin Clarissa, were she likely to live many years, and *that* (if she married not this man) in penury or want, despised and forsaken by all her friends, puts not so high a value upon the conveniencies of life, nor upon life itself, as to seek to re-obtain the one, or to preserve the other, by giving *such* a sanction: a sanction, which (*were she to perform her duty*) would reward the violator.

Nor is it so much from pride as from principle, that I say this. What, sir! when virtue, when chastity, is the crown of a woman, and particularly of a wife, shall your cousin stoop to marry the man who could not form an attempt upon *hers*, but upon a presumption, that she was capable of receiving his offered hand, when he had found himself mistaken in the vile opinion he had conceived of her? Hitherto he has not had reason to think me weak. Nor will I give him an instance so flagrant, that weak I *am*, in a point in which it would be criminal to be *found* weak.

One day, sir, you will perhaps know all my story. But, whenever it is known, I beg that the author of my calamities may not be vindictively sought after. He could not have been the author of them, but for a strange concurrence of unhappy causes. As the law will not be able to reach him when I am gone, the apprehension of any other sort of vengeance terrifies me: since, in such a case, should my friends be *safe*, what honour would his death bring to my memory?—If any of them should come to misfortune, how would my fault be aggravated!

Your ever grateful and affectionate

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

Thursday, Aug. 31.

I CANNOT but own, that I am cut to the heart by *this* Miss Harlowe's interpretation of her letter. She ought never to be

forgiven. *She*, a meek person, and a penitent, and innocent, and pious, and I know not what, who can deceive with a foot in the grave!—

'Tis evident that she sat down to write this letter with a design to mislead and deceive. And if she be capable of that, at such a crisis, she has as much need of *heaven's* forgiveness, as I have of *hers*: and, with all her cant of *charity* and *charity*, if she be not more sure of it than I am of her *real pardon*, and if she take the thing in the light she ought to take it in, she will have a few darker moments yet to come than she seems to expect.

Lord M. himself, who is not one of those (to speak in his own phrase) *who can penetrate a mill-stone*, sees the deceit, and thinks it unworthy of her; though my cousins Montague vindicate her. And no wonder: this cursed partial sex [I hate 'em all—by my soul, I hate 'em all!] will never allow anything against an individual of it, where ours is concerned. Because, if they censure deceit in another, they must condemn their own hearts.

She is to send me a letter after she is in heaven, is she? The devil take such *allegories*; and the devil take thee for calling this absurdity an *innocent* artifice!

But notwithstanding all, you may let her know from me, that I will *not* molest her; since my visits would be so shocking to her; and I hope she will take this into her consideration as a piece of generosity, which she could hardly expect after the deception she has put upon me. And let her further know, that if there be anything in my power that will contribute either to her ease or honour, I will obey her at the very first intimation, however disgraceful or detrimental to myself. All this, to make her unapprehensive, and that she may have nothing to pull her back.

If her cursed relations could be brought as cheerfully to perform *their* parts, I'd answer life for life for her recovery.

But now, to be serious once more, let me tell you, Belford, that if the lady be really so ill as you write she is, it will become you, [*no Roman style here!*] in a case so very affecting, to be a little less pointed and sarcastic in your reflections. For, upon my soul, the matter begins to grate me most confoundedly.

I am now so impatient to hear oftener of her, that I take the hint accidentally given me by our two fellows meeting at Slough, and resolve to go to our friend Doleman's at Uxbridge; whose wife and sister, as well as he, have so frequently pressed me to give them my company for a week or two. There shall I be within two hours' ride, if any thing should happen to induce her to see me: for it will well become her piety, and avowed charity, should the worst happen, [the Lord of heaven and earth, how-

ever, avert that worst !] to give me that pardon from her *lips*, which she has not denied me by *pen and ink*. And as she wishes my reformation, she knows not what good effects such an interview may have upon me.

I shall accordingly be at Doleman's to-morrow morning, by eleven at furthest. My fellow will find me there, at his return from you (with a letter, I hope). I shall have Joel with me likewise, that I may send the oftener, as matters fall out. Were I to be *still nearer*, or in town, it would be impossible to withhold myself from seeing her.

But, if the worst happen!—as by your continual knelling, I know not what to think of it!—THEN say not, in so many dreadful words, what the event is—only that you advise me to take a trip to Paris—and that will stab me to the heart.

Mr. Belford to Robert Lovelace, Esq.

Thursday night, Aug. 31.

WHEN I concluded my last, I hoped, that my next attendance upon this *surprising* lady would furnish me with some particulars as agreeable as now could be hoped for from the declining way she is in, by reason of the welcome letter she had received from her cousin Morden. But it proved quite otherwise to *me*, though not to *herself*; for I think I never was more shocked in my life than on the occasion I shall mention presently.

When I attended her about seven in the evening, she told me that she found herself in a very petulant way, after I had left her. Strange, said she, that the pleasure I received from my cousin's letter should have such an effect upon me? But I could not help giving way to a *comparative* humour, as I may call it, and to think it very hard, that my nearer relations did not take the methods which my cousin Morden kindly took, by inquiring into my merit or demerit, and giving my cause a fair audit, before they proceeded to condemnation.

She had hardly said this, when she started, and a blush overspread her sweet face, on hearing, as I also did, a sort of lumbering noise upon the stairs, as if a large trunk were bringing up between two people: and looking upon me with an eye of concern, Blunderers! said she, they have brought in *something* two hours before the time.—Don't be surprised, sir—it is all to save *you* trouble.

Before I could speak, in came Mrs. Smith: O madam, said she, what have you done?—Mrs. Lovick, entering, made the same exclamation. Lord have mercy upon me, madam! cried I, what have you done?—For, she stepping at the instant to the door,

the women told me it was a coffin.—O Lovelace ! that thou hadst been there at the moment !—Thou, the causer of all these shocking scenes ! Surely thou couldst not have been less affected than I, who have no guilt, as to *her*, to answer for.

With an intrepidity of a piece with the preparation, having directed them to carry it into her bed-chamber, she returned to us : they were not to have brought it in till after dark, said she—Pray, excuse me, Mr. Belford : and don't you, Mrs. Lovick, be concerned : nor you, Mrs. Smith—why should you ? There is nothing more in it, than the unusualness of the thing. Why may we not be as reasonably shocked at going to the church where are the monuments of our ancestors, with whose dust we even *hope* our dust shall be one day mingled, as to be moved at such a sight as this ?

I took my leave ; telling her she had done wrong, very wrong , and ought not, by any means, to have such an object before her.

The women followed her in.—'Tis a strange sex ! nothing is too shocking for them to look upon, or see acted, that has but novelty and curiosity in it.

Down I hastened ; got a chair ; and was carried home, extremely shocked and discomposed : yet weighing the lady's arguments, I know not why I was so affected—except, as she said, at the unusualness of the thing.

Friday morn. Sept. 1.

It is surprising that I, a *man*, should be so much affected as I was, at such an object as was the subject of my former letter.

I really was ill, and restless all night. Thou wert the subject of my execration, as she of my admiration, all the time I was quite awake ; and when I dozed, I dreamt of nothing but of flying hour-glasses, deaths' heads, spades, mattocks, and eternity ; the hint of her devices (as given me by Mrs. Smith) running in my head.

However, not being able to keep away from Smith's, I went thither about seven. The lady was just gone out : she had slept better, I found, than I, though her solemn repository was under her window, not far from her bed-side.

I was prevailed upon by Mrs. Smith and her nurse Shelbourne (Mrs. Lovick being abroad with her) to go up and look at the devices. Mrs. Lovick has since shewn me a copy of the draught by which all was ordered. And I will give thee a sketch of the symbols.

The principal device, neatly etched, on a plate of white metal, is a crowned serpent, with its tail in its mouth, forming a ring, the emblem of eternity : and in the circle made by it is this inscription /

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

April x.

[Then the year.]

ÆTAT. XIX.

For ornaments : at top, an hour-glass, winged. At bottom
an urn.

Under the hour-glass, on another plate, this inscription :

HERE the wicked cease from troubling : and HERE the weary be at rest. Job
iii. 17.

Over the urn, near the bottom :

Turn again unto thy rest, O my soul ! for the Lord hath rewarded thee : and
why ? Thou hast delivered my soul from death ; mine eyes from tears ; and
my feet from falling. Ps. cxvi. 7, 8.

Over this text is the head of a white lily, snap short off, and
just falling from the stalk ; and this inscription over that, between
the principal plate and the lily :

The days of man are but as grass. For he flourisheth as a flower of the field :
for, as soon as the wind goeth over it, it is gone ; and the place thereof shall
know it no more. Ps. ciii. 15, 16.

She excused herself to the women, on the score of her youth,
and being used to draw for her needle-works, for having shewn
more fancy than would perhaps be thought suitable on so solemn
an occasion.

The date, April 10, she accounted for, as not being able to tell
what her *closing-day* would be ; and as that was the fatal day of
her leaving her father's house.

She discharged the undertaker's bill, after I went away, with
as much cheerfulness as she could ever have paid for the clothes
she sold to purchase this her *palace* : for such she called it ; reflect-
ing upon herself for the expensiveness of it, saying that they might
observe in *her*, that pride left not poor mortals to the last : but
indeed she did not know but her father would permit it, *when*
furnished, to be carried down to be deposited with her ancestors ;
and, in that case, she ought not to discredit those ancestors in her
appearance among them.

Friday, Sept. 1. Two o'clock at Smith's.

I could not close my letter in such an uncertainty as must
have added to your impatience. For you have, on several occa-
sions, convinced me that the suspense you love to *give*, would be

the greatest torment to you that you could *receive*. A common case with all aggressive and violent spirits, I believe. I will just mention then (your servant waiting here till I have written) that the lady has had two very severe fits: in the last of which whilst she lay, they sent to the doctor and Mr. Goddard, who both advised that a messenger should be dispatched for me, as her executor; being doubtful whether, if she had a third, it would not carry her off.

She was tolerably recovered by the time I came; and the doctor made her promise before me, that, while she was so weak, she would not attempt any more to go abroad; for, by Mrs. Lovick's description who attended her, the shortness of her breath, her extreme weakness, and the fervour of her devotions when at church, were contraries, which, pulling different ways, (the soul aspiring, the body sinking) tore her tender frame in pieces.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

Uxbridge, Sept. 1. Twelve o'clock at night.

AFTER all, as I am so little distant from the dear creature, and as she is so very ill, I think I cannot excuse myself from making her *one* visit. Nevertheless, if I thought her so near—and that she would be *too much discomposed* by a visit; I would not think of it.—Yet how can I bear the recollection, that when she last went from me (her innocence so triumphant over my premeditated guilt, as was enough to reconcile her to life, and to set her above the sense of injuries so nobly sustained, that) she should then depart with an incurable fracture in her heart; and that *that* should be the last time I should ever see her!—How, how, can I bear this reflection!

O Jack! how my conscience, that gives edge even to thy blunt reflections, tears me!—Even this moment would I give the world to push the cruel reproacher from me by one ray of my usual gaiety!—Sick of myself!—Sick of the remembrance of my vile plots; and of my *light*, my momentary ecstasy, [villainous burglar, felon, thief, that I was!] which has brought upon me such *durable* and such *heavy* remorse! what would I give that I had not been guilty of such barbarous and ungrateful perfidy to the most excellent of God's creatures!

I would end, methinks, with one sprightlier line!—But it will not be.—Let me tell thee then, and rejoice at it if thou wilt, that I

Inexpressibly miserable!

Mr. Belford to Robert Lovelace, Esq.

Sat. morning, Sept. 2.

I HAVE some little pleasure given me by thine, just now brought me. I see now that thou hast a little humanity left. Would to heaven, for the dear lady's sake, as well as for thy own, that thou hadst romaged it up from all the dark forgotten corners of thy soul a little sooner!

The lady is alive, and serene, and calm, and has all her noble intellects clear and strong: but *nineteen* will not however save her. She says, she will now content herself with her closet duties, and the visits of the parish minister; and will not attempt to go out. Nor, indeed, will she, I am afraid, ever walk up or down a pair of stairs again.

I am sorry at my soul to have this to say: but it would be a folly to flatter thee.

As to thy seeing her, I believe the least hint of that sort, now, would cut off some hours of her life.

What has contributed to her serenity, it seems, is that taking the alarm her fits gave her, she has entirely finished, and signed and sealed, her last will: which she had deferred doing till this time, in hopes, as she said, of some good news from Harlowe-Place, which would have induced her to alter some passages in it.

Miss Howe to Miss Clarissa Harlowe.

Tuesday, Aug. 29.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

WE are at length returned to our own home. I had intended to wait on you in London: but my mother is very ill—alas! my dear, she is very ill indeed—and you are likewise very ill—I see *that* by yours of the 25th—what shall I do, if I lose two such near, and dear, and tender friends? She was taken ill yesterday at our last stage in our return home—and has a violent surfeit and fever, and the doctors are doubtful about her.

I see, I see, my dear, you are very bad—and I cannot bear it. Do, my beloved Miss Harlowe, if you *can* be better, do, for *my* sake, *be* better; and send me word of it. Let the bearer bring me a line. If I lose you, my more than sister, and lose my mother, I shall distrust my own conduct, and will not marry. And why should I?—Creeping, cringing in courtship!—O my dear, these men are a vile race of *reptiles* in *our* day, and mere *bears* in *their* own. See in Lovelace all that is desirable in figure, in birth, and in fortune: but in his heart a devil!—See in Hickman—indeed, my dear, I cannot tell what any body can see in Hickman, to be always preach-

ing in his favour. And is it to be expected that I, who could hardly bear control from a mother, should take it from a husband? —From one too, who has neither more wit, nor more understanding, than myself? Yet he to be my instructor!—So he will, I suppose; but more by the insolence of his will, than by the merit of his counsel. It is in vain to think of it. I cannot be a wife to any man breathing whom I at present know. This I the rather mention now, because, on my mother's danger, I know you will be for pressing me the sooner to throw myself into another sort of protection, should I be deprived of her. But no more of this subject, or indeed of any other; for I am obliged to attend my mamma, who cannot bear me out of her sight.

Wednesday, Aug. 30.

My mother, heaven be praised! has had a fine night, and is much better. Her fever has yielded to medicine! and now I can write once more with freedom and ease to you, in hopes that *you* also are better. If this be granted to my prayers, I shall again be happy. I write with still the more alacrity, as I have an opportunity given me to touch upon a subject in which you are nearly concerned.

You must know then, my dear, that your cousin Morden has been here with me. He told me of an interview he had on Monday at Lord M.'s with Lovelace; and asked me abundance of questions about you, and about that villainous man.

I could have raised a fine flame between them if I would: but, observing that he is a man of very lively passions, and believing you would be miserable if any thing should happen to him from a quarrel with a man who is known to have so many advantages at his sword, I made not the worst of the subjects we talked of. But, as I could not tell untruths in his favour, you must think I said enough to make him curse the wretch.

I don't find, well as they used to respect Colonel Morden, that he has influence enough upon them to bring them to any terms of reconciliation.

What can they mean by it?—But your brother is come home, it seems; so, the honour of the house, the reputation of the family, is all the cry!

The colonel is exceedingly out of humour with them all. Yet has he not hitherto, it seems, seen your brutal brother. I told him how ill you were, and communicated to him some of the contents of your letter. He admired *you*, cursed *Lovelace*, and raved against all your *family*.—He declared, that they were all unworthy of you.

At his earnest request, I permitted him to take some brief notes

of such of the contents of your letter to me, as I thought I *could* read to him ; and, particularly, of your melancholy conclusion.

He says, that none of your friends think you so ill as you are, nor will believe it. He is sure they all love you, and that dearly too.

If they do, their present hardness of heart will be the subject of everlasting remorse to them, should you be taken from us—but now it seems [barbarous wretches !] you are to *suffer within an inch of your life*.

He asked me questions about Mr. Belford : and when he had heard what I had to say of that gentleman, and his disinterested services to you, he raved at some villainous surmises thrown out against you by that officious pedant Brand : who, but for his gown, I find would come off poorly enough between your cousin and Lovelace.

The colonel (as one of your trustees) is resolved to see you put into possession of your estate : and, in the meantime, he has actually engaged them to remit to him for you the produce of it accrued since your grandfather's death, (a very considerable sum) and proposes himself to attend you with it. But, by a hint he dropt, I find you had disappointed some people's littleness, by not writing to them for money and supplies ; since they were determined to distress you, and to put you at defiance.

Your cousin imagines, that, before a reconciliation takes place, they will insist, that you shall make such a will, as to that estate, as they shall approve of : but he declares, he will not go out of England till he has seen justice done you by *every body* ; and that you shall not be imposed on either by friend or foe.

You cousin [not *I*, my dear, though it was always my opinion] says, that the whole family is *too rich*, to be either *humble, considerate, or contented*. And as for himself, he has an ample fortune, he says, and thinks of leaving it wholly to you.

Had this villain Lovelace consulted his worldly interest *only*, what a fortune would he have had in you, even although your marrying him had deprived you of a paternal share !

Your affectionate, &c.

ANNA HOWE.

Mr. Belford to Robert Lovelace, Esq.

Sunday evening, Sept. 3.

I WONDER not at the impatience your servant tells me you express to hear from me. I was designing to write you a long letter, and was just returning from Smith's for that purpose ;

but since you are so urgent, you must be contented with a short one.

I attended the lady this morning, just before I set out for Edgeware. She was so ill over night, that she was obliged to leave unfinished her letter to Miss Howe. But early this morning she made an end of it, and had just sealed it up as I came. She was so fatigued with writing, that she told me she would lie down after I was gone, and endeavour to recruit her spirits.

They had sent for Mr. Goddard, when she was so ill last night; and not being able to see him out of her own chamber, he, for the first time, saw her *house* as she calls it. He was extremely shocked and concerned at it; and chid Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Lovick for not persuading her to have such an object removed from her bed-chamber: and when they excused themselves on the *little authority* it was reasonable to suppose they must have with a lady so much their superior, he reflected warmly on those who had *more* authority, and who left her to proceed with such a shocking and solemn whimsy, as he called it.

It is placed near the window, like a harpsichord, though covered over to the ground: and when she is so ill, that she cannot well go to her closet, she writes and reads upon it, as others would upon a desk or table. But (only as she was so ill last night) she chooses not to see any body in that apartment.

The doctor had been with her, as well as Mr. Goddard; and they both joined with great earnestness to persuade her to have her *house* removed out of her sight: but she assured them, that it gave her pleasure and spirits; and being a necessary preparation, she wondered they should be surprised at it, when she had not any of her family about her, or any old acquaintance, on whose care and exactness in these *punctilios*, as she called them, she could rely.

The doctor told Mrs. Smith, that he believed she would hold out long enough for any of her friends to have notice of her state, and to see her, and hardly longer; and since he could not find, that she had any certainty of seeing her cousin Morden, (which made it plain that her relations continued inflexible) he would go home and write a letter to her father, take it as she would.

She had spent great part of the day in intense devotions; and to-morrow morning she is to have with her the same clergyman who has often attended her; from whose hands she will again receive the sacrament.

Thou seest, Lovelace, that all is preparing, that all will be ready; and I am to attend her to-morrow afternoon, to take some instructions from her in relation to my part in the office to be performed for her.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Miss Howe.

Saturday, Sept. 2.

I WRITE, my beloved Miss Howe, though very ill still; but I could not by the return of your messenger; for I was then unable to hold a pen.

Your mother's illness (as mentioned in the first part of your letter) gave me great distress for you, till I read farther. You bewailed it as became a daughter so sensible. May you be blessed in each other for many, very many happy years to come! I doubt not, that even this sudden and grievous indisposition, by the frame it has put you in, and the apprehension it has given you of losing so dear a mother, will contribute to the happiness I wish you: for, alas! my dear, we seldom know how to value the blessings we enjoy, till we are in danger of losing them, or have actually lost them: and then, what would we give to have them restored to us!

What, I wonder, has again happened between you and Mr. Hickman? Although I know it not, I dare say it is owing to some pretty petulance, to some half ungenerous advantage taken of his obligingness and assiduity. Will you never, my dear, give the weight you and all our sex ought to give to the qualities of sobriety and regularity of life and manners in that sex? Must bold creatures, and forward spirits, for ever, and by the best and wisest of us, as well as by the indiscreetest, be the most kindly treated?

My dear friends know not, that I *have* actually suffered within less than *an inch* of my life.

Poor Mr. Brand! He meant well, I believe. I am afraid all will turn heavily upon him, when he probably imagined, that he was taking the best method to oblige. But were he *not* to have been so light of belief, and so weakly officious; and had given a more favourable, and, it would be strange if I could not say a *juster* report, things would have been, nevertheless, exactly as they are.

I must lay down my pen. I am very ill. I believe I shall be better by-and-by. The bad writing would betray me, although I had a mind to keep from you, what the event must soon—

* * * *

God for ever bless you, and all you love and honour, and reward you here and hereafter for your kindness to

Your ever obliged and affectionate

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Mrs. Norton to Miss Clarissa Harlowe.

Thursday, August 31.

I HAD written sooner, my dearest young lady, but that I have been endeavouring, ever since the receipt of your last letter, to obtain a private audience of your mother, in hopes of leave to communicate it to her. But last night I was surprised by an invitation to breakfast at Harlowe-Place this morning: and the chariot came early to fetch me: an honour I did not expect.

When I came, I found there was to be a meeting of all your family with Colonel Morden, at Harlowe-Place; and it was proposed by your mother, and consented to, that I should be present. Your cousin, I understand, had with difficulty brought this meeting to bear; for your brother had before industriously avoided all conversation with him on the affecting subject; urging, that it was not necessary to talk to Mr. Morden upon it, who, being a remoter relation than themselves, had no business to make himself a judge of their conduct to their daughter, their niece, and their sister; especially as he had declared himself in her favour; adding, that he should hardly have patience to be questioned by Mr. Morden on that head.

I was in hopes that your mother would have given me an opportunity of talking with her alone before the company met; but she seemed studiously to avoid it: I dare say, however, not with her inclination.

I was ordered in just before Mr. Morden came, and was bid to sit down—which I did in the window.

The colonel, when he came, began the discourse, by *renewing*, as he called it, his solicitations in your favour. He set before them your penitence; your ill health; your virtue, though once betrayed, and basely used; he then read to them Mr. Lovelace's letter, a most contrite one indeed; and your *high-souled* answer; for that was what he justly called it; and he treated as it deserved Mr. Brand's officious information (of which, I had before heard, he had made them ashamed) by representations founded upon inquiries made by Mr. Alston, whom he had procured to go up, on purpose to acquaint himself with your manner of life, and what was meant by the visits of that Mr. Belford.

He then told them, that he had the day before waited upon Miss Howe, and had been shown a letter from you to her, and permitted to take some memorandums from it, in which you appeared, both by hand-writing, and the contents, to be so very ill that it seemed doubtful to him, if it were possible for you to get over it. And when he read to them that passage, where you ask Miss Howe, "What can be done for you now, were your friends to be ever so favourable? and wish for *their* sakes, more than

for your *own*, that they would still relent ;” and then say, “You are very ill—you must drop your pen—and ask excuse for your crooked writing ; and take, as it were, a last farewell of Miss Howe : *Adieu, my dear, adieu,*” are your words—

O, my child ! my child ! said your mamma, weeping and clasping her hands.

Dear madam, said your brother, be so good as to think you have more children than this ungrateful one.

Yet your sister seemed affected.

Your uncle Harlowe, wiping his eyes, O cousin, said he, if one thought the poor girl was really so ill—

She *must*, said your uncle Antony. This is written to her private friend. God forbid she should be quite lost !

Your uncle Harlowe wished they did not carry their resentments too far.

I begged, for God’s sake, wringing my hands, and with a bended knee, that they would permit me to go up to you ; engaging to give them a faithful account of the way you were in. But I was chidden by your brother ; and this occasioned some angry words between him and Mr. Morden.

I believe, sir, I believe, madam, said your sister, to her father and mother, we need not trouble my cousin to read any more. It does but grieve and disturb you. My sister Clary seems to be ill : I think if Mrs. Norton were permitted to go up to her, it would be right. Wickedly as she has acted, if she be truly penitent—

Here she stopt ; and every one being silent, I stood up once more, and besought them to let me go : and then I offered to read a passage or two in your letter to me of the 24th. But I was taken up again by your brother ; and this occasioned still higher words between the colonel and him.

Your mother, hoping to gain upon your inflexible brother, and to divert the anger of the two gentlemen from each other, proposed that the colonel should proceed in reading the minutes he had taken from your letter.

Your uncles were also both affected :—but your brother went round to each ; and again reminded your mother that she had other children : what was there, he said, in what was read, but the result of the talent you had of moving the passions ? and he blamed them for choosing to hear read what they knew their abused indulgence could not be proof against.

This set Mr. Morden up again : fie upon you, cousin Harlowe, said he—I see plainly to whom it is owing that all relationship and ties of blood with regard to this sweet sufferer are laid aside. Such rigours as these make it difficult for a sliding virtue ever to recover itself.

Your brother pretended the honour of the family, and declared that no child ought to be forgiven who abandoned the most indulgent of parents against warning, against the light of knowledge as you had done.

But, sir, and ladies, said I, rising from my seat in the window, and humbly turning round to each, if I may be permitted to speak, my dear Miss asks only for a blessing. She does not beg to be received to favour; she is very ill, and asks only for a last blessing.

Come, come, goody Norton, [I need not tell you who said this] you are up again with your lamentables!—A good woman, as you are, to forgive so readily a crime that has been as disgraceful to your part in her education, as to her family, is a weakness that would induce one to suspect your virtue if you were to be encountered by a temptation *properly adapted*.

By some such charitable logic, said Mr. Morden, as this, is my cousin Arabella captivated, I doubt not. If to be uncharitable and unforgiving, is to give a proof of virtue, you, Mr. James Harlowe, are the most virtuous young man in the world.

I knew how it would be, replied your brother, in a passion, if I met Mr. Morden upon this business. I would have declined it; but you, sir, to his father, would not permit me so to do.

But, sir, turning to the colonel, in no other presence—

Then, cousin James, interrupted the other gentleman, that which is *your* protection, it seems is *mine*. I am not used to bear defiance thus—you are my cousin, sir,—and the son and nephew of persons as dear as near to me—there he paused—

Are we, said your father, to be made still more unhappy among ourselves, when the villain lives that ought to be the object of every one's resentment, who has either a value for the family, or for this ungrateful girl?

That's the man, said your cousin, whom last Monday, as you know, I went purposely to make the object of mine. But what could I say, when I found him so willing to repair his crime?—And I give it as my opinion, and have written accordingly to my poor cousin, that it is best for all round, that his offer should be accepted; and let me tell you—

Tell me nothing, said your father, quite enraged, of that very vile fellow! I have a riveted hatred to him. I would rather see the rebel die an hundred deaths, were it possible, than that she should give such a villain as him a relation to my family.

Well, but there is no room to think, said your mother, that she *will* give us such a relation, my dear. The poor girl will lessen, I fear, the number of our relations; not increase it. If she be so ill as we are told she is, let us send Mrs. Norton up to her.—That's

the *least* we can do—let us take her, however, out of the hands of that Belford.

Both your uncles supported this motion ; the latter part of it especially.

Your brother observed, in his ill-natured way, what a fine piece of consistency it was, in you, to refuse the vile injurer, and the amends he offered ; yet to throw yourself upon the protection of his fast friend.

Miss Harlowe was apprehensive, she said, that you would leave all you *could* leave to that pert creature Miss Howe [so she called her], if you should die.

O do not, do not suppose *that*, my Bella, said your poor mother. I cannot think of parting with my Clary—with all her faults, she is my child—her reasons for her conduct are not heard. It would break my heart to lose her.—I think, my dear, to your father, none so fit as I to go up, if you will give me leave : and Mrs. Norton shall accompany me.

This was a sweet motion, and your father paused upon it. Mr. Morden offered his service to escort her. Your uncles seemed to approve of it. But your brother dashed all. I hope, sir, said he, to his father ; I hope madam, to his mother ; that you will not endeavour to recover a faulty daughter, by losing an unculpable son. I do declare, that if ever my sister Clary darkens these doors again, I never will. I will set out, madam, the same hour you go to London (on such an errand) to Edinburgh, and there I will reside ; and try to forget that I have relations in England so near and so dear as you are now all to me.

Good God, said the colonel, what a declaration is this !—And suppose, sir, and suppose, madam, [turning to your father and mother] this *should* be the case, whether is it better, think you, that you should lose for ever such a daughter as my cousin Clary, or that your son should go to Edinburgh, and reside there upon an estate which will be the better for his residence upon it.

Your brother's passionate behaviour hereupon is hardly to be described. He resented it as promoting an alienation of the affection of the family to him. And to such a height were resentments carried, every one siding with him, that the colonel, with hands and eyes lifted up, cried out, what hearts of flint am I related to ! —O, cousin Harlowe, (to your father,) are you resolved to have but one daughter ? Are you, madam, to be taught, by a son who has no bowels, to forget you are a mother ?

The colonel turned from them to draw out his handkerchief, and could not for a moment speak. The eyes of every one but the hard-hearted brother, caught tears from his.

But then turning to them (with the more indignation, as it seemed, as he had been obliged to shew a humanity, which how-

ever, no brave heart should be ashamed of) I leave ye all, said he, fit company for one another. I will never open my lips to any of you more upon this subject. I will instantly make my will, and in me shall the dear creature have the father, uncle, brother, she has lost. I will prevail upon her to take the tour of France and Italy with me ; nor shall she return till ye know the value of *such* a daughter.

And saying this, he hurried out of the room, went into the court-yard, and ordered his horse.

Friday morning.

Betty was with me just now. She tells me, that your cousin Morden is so much displeased with them all, that he has refused to lodge any more at your uncle Antony's ; and has even taken up with inconvenient lodgings, till he is provided with others to his mind. This very much concerns them ; and they repent their violent treatment of him : and the more, as he is resolved, he says, to make you his sole executrix, and heir to all his fortune.

What noble fortunes still, my dearest young lady, await you ; I am thoroughly convinced, if it please God to preserve your life and your health, that every body will soon be reconciled to you, and that you will see many happy days.

For Miss Howe's sake, who in her new engagements will so much want you ; for your cousin Morden's sake, for your mother's sake, if I must go no farther in your family ; and yet I can say, for all their sakes ; and for my sake, my dearest Miss Clary ; let your resumed and accustomed magnanimity bear you up. You have many things to do which I know not the person who will do, if you leave us.

Join your prayers then to mine, that God will spare you to a world that wants you and your example ; and, although your days may seem to have been numbered, who knows but that, with the good King Hezekiah, you may have them prolonged ? Which God grant, if it be his blessed will, to the prayers of

Your

JUDITH NORTON.

Mr. Belford to Robert Lovelace, Esq.

Monday, Sept. 4.

THE lady would not read the letter she had from Mrs. Norton, till she had received the communion, for fear it might contain any thing that might disturb that happy calm, which she had been endeavouring to obtain for it. And when that solemn office was over, she was so composed, she said, that she thought she could receive any news, however affecting, with tranquillity.

Nevertheless, in reading it, she was forced to leave off several times through weakness and a dimness in her sight, of which she complained; if I may say *complained*; for so easy and soft were her complaints, that they could hardly be called such.

She was very much affected at diverse parts of this letter. She wept several times, and sighed often. Mrs. Lovick told me that these were the gentle exclamations she broke out into, as she read:—*Her unkind, her cruel brother!—How unsisterly!—Poor dear woman!* seeming to speak of Mrs. Norton. *Her kind cousin!—O these flaming spirits!* and then reflecting upon herself more than once—*What a deep error is mine!—What evils have I been the occasion of!*—

When I was admitted to her presence, I have received, said she, a long and not very pleasing letter from my dear Mrs. Norton. It will soon be in your hands. I am advised against appointing you to the office you have so kindly accepted of: but you must resent nothing of these things. My choice will have an odd appearance to them: but it is now too late to alter it, if I would.

I would fain write an answer to it, continued she: but I have no distinct sight, Mr. Belford, no steadiness of fingers—this mistiness, however, perhaps be gone by-and-by.—Then turning to Mrs. Lovick, I don't think I am dying yet—not *actually* dying, Mrs. Lovick—for I have no bodily pain—no numbness; no signs of immediate death, I think.—And my breath, which used of late to be so short, is now tolerable—my head clear, my intellects free—I think I cannot be dying yet—I shall have agonies, I doubt—life will not give up so blessedly easy, I fear—yet how merciful is the Almighty, to give his poor creature such a sweet serenity!—'Tis what I have prayed for!—What encouragement, Mrs. Lovick, so near one's dissolution, to have it to hope that one's prayers are answered!

Mrs. Smith, as well as Mrs. Lovick, was with her. They were both in tears; nor had I, any more than they, power to say a word in answer: yet she spoke all this, as well as what follows, with a surprising composure of mind and countenance.

But, Mr. Belford, said she assuming a still sprightlier air and accent, let me talk a little to you, while I am thus able to say what I have to say

Mrs. Lovick, don't leave us (for the women were rising to go)—pray sit down; and do you, Mrs. Smith, sit down too.—Dame Shelbourne, take this key, and open that upper drawer, I will move to it.

She did, with trembling knees. Here, Mr. Belford, is my will. It is witnessed by three persons of Mr. Smith's acquaintance.

I dare to hope, that my cousin Morden will give you assistance, if you request it of him. My cousin Morden continues his affec-

tion for me: but as I have not seen *him*, I leave all the trouble upon *you*, Mr. Belford. This deed may want *forms*; and it *does*, no doubt: but the less, as I have my grandfather's will almost by heart, and have *often enough* heard that canvassed. I will lay it by itself in this corner; putting it at the farther end of the drawer.

She then took up a parcel of letters, inclosed in one cover sealed with three seals of black wax: This, said she, I sealed up last night. The cover, sir, will let you know what is to be done with what it incloses. This is the superscription [holding it close to her eyes, and rubbing them]: *As soon as I am certainly dead, this is to be broken open by Mr. Belford.*—Here, sir, I put it [placing it by the will]—These folded papers, are letters and copies of letters, disposed according to their dates. Miss Howe will do with those as you and she shall think fit. If I receive any more, or more come when I cannot receive them, they may be put into this drawer [pulling out and pushing in the looking-glass drawer] to be given to Mr. Belford, be they from whom they will. You'll be so kind as to observe *that*, Mrs. Lovick and dame Shelbourne.

While we were thus solemnly engaged, a servant came with a letter from her cousin Morden:—Then, said she, he is not come *himself*!

She broke it open: but every line, she said, appeared two to ner: so that, being unable to read it herself, she desired I would read it to her. I did so; and wished it were more consolatory to her: but she was all patient attention; tears however often trickling down her cheeks.

When I had read the letter through to the languishing lady, And so, my friends, said she, have I heard of a patient who actually died, while five or six principal physicians were in a consultation, and not agreed upon what name to give his distemper. The patient was an emperor, the Emperor Joseph, I think,

I asked, if I should write to her cousin, as he knew not how ill she was, to hasten up?

By no means, she said; since, if he were not already set out, **she** was persuaded that she should be so low by the time he could receive my letter, and come, that his presence would but discompose and hurry *her*, and afflict *him*.

I hope, however, she is not so very near her end. And without saying any more to her, when I retired, I wrote to Colonel Morden, that if he expects to see his beloved cousin alive, he must lose no time in setting out. I sent this letter by his own servant.

Dr. H. sent away *his* letter to her father by a particular hand **this morning**.

Mrs. Walton, the milliner, has also just now acquainted Mrs.

Smith, that her husband had a letter brought by a special messenger, from parson Brand, within this half hour, inclosing the copy of one he had written to Mr. John Harlowe, recanting his officious one.

And as all these, and the copy of the lady's letter to Col. Mordeu, will be with them pretty much at a time, the devil's in the family if they are not struck with a remorse that shall burst open the double-barred doors of their hearts.

J. BELFORD.

Dr. H. to James Harlowe, senior, Esq.

SIR,

London, Sept. 4.

IF I may judge of the hearts of other parents by my own, I do not doubt but you will take it well to be informed, that you have yet an opportunity to save yourself and family great future regret, by dispatching hither some one of it, with your last blessing, and your lady's to the most excellent of her sex.

I have some reason to believe, sir, that she has been represented to you in a very different light from the true one. And this it is that induces me to acquaint you, that I think her, on the best grounds, absolutely irreproachable in all her conduct which has passed under my eye, or come to my ear; and that her very misfortunes are made glorious to her, and honourable to all that are related to her, by the use she has made of them; and by the patience and resignation with which she supports herself in a painful, lingering, and dispiriting decay! and by the greatness of mind with which she views her approaching dissolution. And all this from proper motives; from motives in which a dying saint might glory.

She knows not that I write. I must indeed acknowledge, that I offered to do so some days ago, and that very pressingly: nor did she refuse me from obstinacy—she seems not to know what that is—but desired me to forbear for two days only, in hopes that her newly-arrived cousin, who, as she heard, was soliciting for her would be able to succeed in her favour.

I hope I shall not be thought an officious man on this occasion; but if I am, I cannot help it; being driven to write, by a kind of *parental* and irresistible impulse.

But, sir, whatever you think fit to do, or permit to be done, must be speedily done; for she cannot, I verily think, live a week: and how long of that short space she may enjoy her admirable intellects to take comfort in the favours you may think proper to confer upon her, cannot be said, I am, SIR,

Your most humble servant,

R. H.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

Uxbridge, Tuesd. morn. between 4 and 5.

AND can it be, that this admirable creature will so soon leave this cursed world ! For cursed I shall think it, and more cursed myself, when she is gone. O, Jack ! thou who canst sit so cool, and, like Addison's angel, *direct*, and even *enjoy*, the storm, that tears up my happiness by the roots ; blame me not for my impatience, however unreasonable ! If thou knewest, that already I feel the torments of the damned, in the remorse that wrings my heart, on looking back upon my past actions by her, thou wouldst not be the devil thou art to halloo on a worrying conscience, which, without thy merciless aggravations, is altogether intolerable.

Forbidden to attend the dear creature, yet longing to see her, I would give the world to be admitted once more to her beloved presence. I ride towards London three or four times a day, resolving, *pro* and *con*, twenty times in two or three miles ; and at last ride back ; and, in view of Uxbridge, loathing even the kind friend, and hospitable house, turn my horse's head again towards the town, and resolve to gratify my humor, let her take it as she will ; but, at the very entrance of it, after infinite canvassings, once more alter my mind, dreading to offend and shock her, lest, by that means, I should curtail a life so precious.

Yesterday, in particular, to give you an idea of the strength of that impatience, which I cannot avoid suffering to break out upon my servants, I had no sooner dispatched Will, than I took horse to meet him on his return.

In order to give him time, I loitered about on the road, riding up *this* lane to the one highway, down *that* to the other, just as my horse pointed ; all the way cursing my very being ; and though so lately looking *down* upon all the world, wishing to change conditions with the poorest beggar that cried to me for, charity as I rode by him—and throwing him money, in hopes to obtain by his prayers the blessing my heart pants after.

After I had sauntered about an hour or two (which seemed three or four tedious ones) fearing I had slipt the fellow, I inquired at every turnpike, whether a servant in such a livery had not passed through in his return from London, on a full gallop ; for woe had been to the dog, had I met him on a sluggish trot ! And lest I should miss him at one end of Kensington, as he might take either the Acton or Hammersmith road ; or at the other, as he might come through the Park, or not ! how many score times did I ride backwards and forwards from the palace to the Gore, making myself the subject of observation to all passengers, whether on horse-back or on foot ; who, no doubt, wondered to see a well-dressed and well-mounted man, sometimes ambling, sometimes prancing

(as the beast had more fire than his master) backwards and forwards in so short a compass !

Yet all this time, though longing to espy the fellow, did I dread to meet him, lest he should be charged with fatal tidings.

Woe be to either of the wretches who shall bring me the fatal news that she is no more ! For it is but too likely that a shriek-owl so hated will never whoot or scream again ; unless the shock, that will probably disorder my whole frame on so sad an occasion (by *unsteady* my hand) shall divert my aim from his head, heart, or bowels, if it turn not against my own.

But, surely, she will not, she cannot yet die ! Such a matchless excellence.

—whose mind

Contains a world, and seems for all things framed,

could not be lent to be so soon demanded back again !

But may it not be, that thou, Belford, art in a plot with the dear creature (who will not let me attend her to convince myself) in order to work up my soul to the deepest remorse ; and that, when she is convinced of the sincerity of my penitence, and when my mind is made such wax, as to be fit to take what impression she pleases to give it, she will then raise me up with the joyful tidings of her returning health and acceptance of me !

Do, *dear* Belford, let it be so !—And, O, my dearest, and ever dear Clarissa, keep me no longer in this cruel suspense ; in which I suffer a thousand times more than ever I made thee suffer. Nor fear thou that I will resent, or recede on an *eclaircissement* so desirable ; for I will adore thee for ever, and, without reproaching thee for the pangs thou hast tortured me with, confess thee as much my superior in noble and generous contrivances, as thou art in virtue and honour !

But, once more—should the worst happen—say not what that worst is—and I am gone from this hated island—gone for ever—and may eternal—but I am crazed already—and will therefore conclude myself,

Thine more than mine own,

(And no great compliment either,)

R. L.

Mr. Belford to Robert Lovelace, Esq.

Tuesday, Sept. 5, in the morn. at Mr. Smith's.

When I read yours of this morning, I could not help pitying you for the account you give of the dreadful anxiety and suspense you labour under. I wish from my heart all were to end as you

are so willing to hope : but it will not be ; and your suspense, if the worst part of your torment, as you say it is, will soon be over ; but alas ! in a way you wish not.

I attended the lady just now. She is extremely ill : yet is she aiming at an answer to her Norton's letter, which she began yesterday in her own chamber, and has written a good deal : but in a hand not like her own fine one, as Mrs. Lovick tells me, but much larger, and the lines crooked.

I have accepted of the offer of a room adjoining to the widow Lovick's, till I see how matters go ; but unknown to the lady ; and I shall go home every night, for a few hours. I would not lose a sentence that I could gain from lips so instructive, nor the opportunity of receiving any command from her, for an estate.

In this, my new apartment, I now write, and shall continue to write, as occasion offers, that I may be the more circumstantial : but I depend upon the return of my letters, or copies of them, on demand, that I may have together all that relates to this affecting story ; which I shall re-peruse with melancholy pleasure to the end of my life.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe to Mrs. Norton.

MY DEAREST MRS. NORTON,

I am afraid I shall not be able to write all that is upon my mind to say to you upon the subject of your last. Yet I will try.

As to my friends, and as to the sad breakfasting, I cannot help being afflicted for *them*. What alas ! has not my mother, in particular, suffered by my rashness !—Yet to allow so much for a son !—so little for a daughter !—But all now will soon be over, as to me. I hope they will bury all their resentments in my grave.

The granting of one request only now remains as a desirable one from them. Which nevertheless, when granted, I shall not be sensible of. It is, that they will be pleased to permit my remains to be laid with those of my ancestors—placed at the feet of my dear grandfather, as I have mentioned in my will. This however, as they please. For, after all, this vile body ought not so much to engage my cares. It is a weakness—but let it be called a *natural* weakness, and I shall be excused ; especially when a reverential gratitude shall be known to be the foundation of it. You know my dear woman, how my grandfather loved me. And you know how much I honoured him, and that from my very infancy to the hour of his death. How often since have I wished, that he had not loved *me* so well !

I wish not now, at the writing of this, to see even my cousin Morden. Oh, my blessed woman ! My dear maternal friend ! I

am entering upon a better tour, than to France or Italy either!—Or even than to settle at my once beloved dairy-house!—All these prospects and pleasures, which used to be so agreeable to me in health, how poor seem they to me now!—

* * * *

Twice have I been forced to leave off. I *wished*, that my last writing might be to you, or to Miss Howe, if it might not be to my dearest ma——

Mamma, I would have wrote—is the word distinct?—My eyes are *so* misty!—If, when I apply to you, I break off in half-words, do you supply them—the kindest are *your* due—Be sure take the kindest, to fill up chasms with, if any chasms there be—

* * * *

Another breaking off!—But the new day seems to rise upon me with healing in its wings. I have gotten, I think, a recruit of strength: spirits, I bless God, I have not of late wanted.

Let my dearest Miss Howe purchase her wedding garments—and may all temporal blessings attend the charming preparation!—Blessings *will*, I make no question, notwithstanding the little cloudinesses, that Mr Hickman encounters with now-and-then, which are but prognostics of a future golden day to him: for her heart is good, and her head not wrong.—{But great merit is coy, and that coyness has not always its foundation in pride; but if it should *seem* to be pride take off the skin-deep covering, and, in her, it is noble diffidence and, a love that wants but to be assured!}

As for me, never bride was so ready as I am. My wedding garments are bought—and though not fine or gaudy to the sight, though not adorned with jewels, and set off with gold and silver (for I have no beholders' eyes to wish to glitter in) yet will they be the easiest, the *happiest* suit, that ever bridal maiden wore—for they are such as carry with them a security against all those anxieties, pains, and perturbations which sometimes succeed to the most promising outsettings.

And now, my dear Mrs Norton, do I wish for no other.

O hasten, good God, if it be thy blessed will, the happy moment that I am to be decked out in this all-quieting garb! And sustain comfort, bless, and protect with the all-shadowing wing of thy mercy, my dear parents, my uncles, my brother, my sister, my cousin Morden, my ever dear and ever kind Miss Howe, my good Mrs. Norton, and every deserving person to whom *they* wish well! is the ardent prayer, first and last, of every beginning hour, as the clock tells it to me, (hours now are days, nay, years) of

Your now not sorrowing or afflicted, but happy,

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Mr. Belford to Robert Lovelace, Esq.

Tuesday, Sept. 5, six o'clock.

THE lady remains exceedingly weak and ill. Her intellects nevertheless, continue clear and strong, and her piety and patience are without example. Every one thinks this night will be her last. What a shocking thing is that to say of such an excellence! She will not, however, send away her letter to her Norton, as yet. She endeavoured in vain to superscribe it: so desired me to do it. Her fingers will not hold her pen with the requisite steadiness. She has, I fear, written and read her last!

eight o'clock.

She is somewhat better than she was. The doctor has been here, and thinks she will hold out yet a day or two. He has ordered her, as for some time past, only some little cordials to take when ready to faint. She seemed disappointed, when he told her she might yet live two or three days; and said, she longed for dismissal!—Life was not so easily extinguished, she saw, as some imagined.—*Death from grief*, was, she believed, *the slowest of deaths*. But God's will must be done:—Her only prayer was now for submission to it: for she doubted not, but by the divine goodness she should be an happy creature, as soon as she could be divested of these *rags of mortality*.

Of her own accord, she mentioned you; which till then she had avoided to do. She asked, with great serenity, where you were?

I told her where; and your motives for being so near; and read to her a few lines of yours of this morning, in which you mention your wishes to see her, your sincere affliction, and your resolution not to approach her without her consent.

I would have read more; but she said Enough, Mr. Belford, enough!—Poor man, does his conscience begin to find him!—Then need not any body to wish him a greater punishment!—May it work upon him to a happy purpose!

I took the liberty to say, that as she was in such a frame, that nothing now seemed capable of discomposing her, I could wish that you might have the benefit of her exhortations, which, I dared to say, while you were so seriously affected, would have a greater force upon you than a thousand sermons; and how happy you would think yourself, if you could but receive forgiveness on your knees.

How can you think of such a thing, Mr. Belford? said she, with some emotion: my composure is owing, next to the divine goodness blessing my earnest supplications for it, to the *not seeing* him. Yet let him know, that I now again repeat, that I forgive him.—And may God Almighty, clasping her fingers, and lifting

up her eyes, forgive him too; and perfect his repentance, and sanctify it to him!—Tell him I say so! And tell him, that if I could not say so with my whole heart, I should be very uneasy and think that my hopes of mercy to myself were but weakly founded; and that I had still, in any harboured resentment, some hankerings after a life which he has been the cause of shortening.

The divine creature then turning aside her head—Poor man! said she, I once could have loved him. This is saying more than ever I could say of any other man out of my own family! Would he have permitted me to have been an humble instrument to have made him good, I think I could have made him happy! But tell him not this, if he be *really* penitent—it may too much affect him!

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

Wedn. morn. Sept. 6.

AND is she somewhat better?—Blessings upon thee without number or measure! Let her still be better and better; *Tell* me so at least, if she be *not* so: for thou knowest not what joy that poor temporary reprieve, that she will hold out yet a day or two, gave me.

But who told this hard-hearted and death-pronouncing doctor, that she will hold it no longer? By what warrant says he this? What presumption in these parading solemn fellows of a college, which will be my contempt to the latest hour of my life, if this brother of it (eminent as he is deemed to be) cannot work an ordinary miracle in *her* favour, or rather in *mine*!

Let me tell thee, Belford, that already he deserves the *utmost* contempt, for suffering this charming clock to run down so low. What must be his art, if it could not wind it up in a quarter of the time he has attended her, when, at his first visits, the springs and wheels of life and motion were so good, that they seemed only to want common care and oiling!

I am obliged to you for endeavouring to engage her to see me. 'Twas acting like a friend. If she *had* vouchsafed me that favour, she should have seen at her feet the most abject adorer that ever kneeled to justly-offended beauty.

What she bid you, and what she *forbid* you, to tell me (the latter for *tender* considerations;) that she forgives me; and that, could she have made me a *good* man, she could have made me a *happy* one! that she even *loved* me! At such a moment to own that *she once loved me!* Never before loved any man! That she prays for me! That her last tear should be shed for me,

could she by it save a soul doomed, without *her*, to perdition !—O Belford ! Belford ! I cannot bear it !—What a dog, what a devil have I been to a goodness so superlative !—Why does she not inveigh against me ?—Why does she not execrate me ?—O the triumphant subduer !—Ever above me !—And now to leave me so infinitely below her !

Tell her, O tell her, Belford ! that her prayers and wishes, her superlatively generous prayers and wishes shall *not* be vain : that I *can*, and *do* repent—and *long* have repented :—tell her of my frequent deep remorse—it was impossible that such remorse should not at last produce *effectual* remorse—yet he must not leave me—she must live, if she would wish to have my contrition perfect—for what can despair produce ?

* * * *

I WILL do every thing that you would have me do, in the return of your letters. You have infinitely obliged me by this last, and by pressing for an admission for me, though it succeeded not.

But say not, Jack, that she must leave us yet. If she recover, and if I can but re-obtain her favour, then, indeed, will life be life to me. The world never *saw* such a husband as I will make. I will have no will but hers. She shall conduct me in all my steps. She shall open and direct my prospects, and turn every motion of my heart as she pleases.

You tell me, in your letter, that at eleven o'clock she had sweet rest ; and my servant acquaints me, from Mrs. Smith, that she has had a good night. What hopes does this fill me with ! I have given the fellow five guineas for his good news, to be divided between him and his fellow-servant.

Dear, dear Jack ! confirm this to me in thy next—for *Heaven's* sake do !—Tell the doctor I will make him a present of a thousand guineas if he recover her. Ask if a consultation be necessary.

Adieu, dear Belford ! Confirm, I beseech thee, the hopes that now, with sovereign gladness, have taken possession of a heart, that, next to hers, is

Thine.

Mr. Belford to Robert Lovelace, Esq.

Wedn. morn. eight o'clock, (Sept. 6.)

YOUR servant arrived here before I was stirring. I sent him to Smith's to inquire how the lady was ; and ordered him to call upon me when he came back. I was pleased to hear she had tolerable rest. As soon as I had dispatched him with the letter I had written over night, I went to attend her.

I found her up and dressed; in a white satin night-gown. Ever elegant: but now more so, than I had seen her for a week past: her aspect serenely cheerful.

She mentioned the increased dimness of her eyes, and the tremor which had invaded her limbs. If this be dying, said she, there is nothing at all shocking in it. My body hardly sensible of pain, my mind at ease, my intellects clear and perfect as ever. What a good and gracious God have I!—For this is what I always prayed for.

I told her, it was not so serene with you.

There is not the same reason for it, replied she. 'Tis a choice comfort, Mr. Belford, at the winding up of our short story, to be able to say, I have rather *suffered injuries myself*, than *offered them to others*.

Wednesday morning, ten o'clock.

The poor lady is just recovered from a fainting fit, which has left her at death's door. Her late tranquillity and freedom from pain, seemed but a *lightening*, as Mrs. Lovick and Mrs. Smith called it.

By my faith, Lovelace, I had rather part with all the friends I have in the world, than with this lady. I never knew what a virtuous, a holy friendship, as I may call mine to her, was before. But to be so *new* to it, and to be obliged to forego it so soon, what an affliction! Yet, thank Heaven, I lose her not by *my own fault*!—But 'twould be barbarous not to spare thee now.

She has sent for the divine who visited her before, to pray with her.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

Kensington, Wednesday noon.

LIKE Æsop's traveller, thou blowest hot and cold, life and death, in the same breath, with a view, no doubt, to distract me. How familiarly dost thou use the words, *dying, dimness, tremor*. Never did any mortal ring so many changes on so few bells. Thy true father, I dare swear, was a butcher, or an undertaker by the delight thou seemest to take in scenes of death and horror. Thy barbarous reflection, that thou lovest her not by thine own fault, is never to be forgiven. Thou hast but one way to atone for the torments thou gavest me, and that is, by sending me word that she is better, and will recover. Whether it be true or not, let me be told so, and I will go abroad rejoicing and believing it, and my wishes and imagination shall make out all the rest.

If she live but one year, that I may acquit myself *to myself*

(no matter for the world!) that her death is not owing to me, I will compound for the rest.

Will neither vows nor prayers save her! I never prayed in my life, but all the years of it together, as I have done for this fortnight past: and I have most sincerely repented of all my baseness to her—and will nothing do?

If *ever* thou lovedst but half so fervently as I love—but of that thy heavy soul is not capable.

Send me word by the next, I conjure thee, in the names of all her kindred saints and angels, that she is living, and likely to live!—If thou sendest ill news, thou wilt be answerable for the consequence, whether it be fatal to the messenger, or to thy.

LOVELACE.

Mr. Belford to Robert Lovelace, Esq.

Wednesday, eleven o'clock.

DR. H. has just been here. He tarried with me till the minister had done praying by the lady; and then we were both admitted. Mr. Goddard, who came while the doctor and the clergyman were with her, went away with them when they went. They took a solemn and everlasting leave of her, as I have no scruple to say; blessing her, and being blessed by her; and wishing (when it came to be their lot) for an exit, as happy as hers is likely to be.

She had again earnestly requested of the doctor his opinion how long it was *now* probable that she could continue: and he told her, that he apprehended she would hardly see to-morrow night. She said, she should number the hours with greater pleasure, than ever she numbered any in her life, on the most joyful occasion.

This moment a man is come from Miss Howe with a letter. Perhaps I shall be able to send you the contents.

* * * *

SHE endeavoured several times with earnestness, but in vain, to read the letters of her dear friend. The writing, she said, was too fine for her grosser sight, and the lines staggered under her eye. And indeed she trembled so, she could not hold the paper: and at last desired Mrs. Lovick to read it to her, the messenger waiting for an answer.

Miss Howe to Miss Clarissa Harlowe.

Tuesday, Sept. 5.

O MY DEAREST FRIEND!

WHAT will become of your poor Anna Howe! I see by your

writing, as well as read by your own account, (which were you not very, *very* ill, you would not have touched more tenderly) how it is with you! Why have I thus long delayed to attend you! Could I think, that the comfortings of a faithful friend were as nothing to a gentle mind in distress, that I could be prevailed upon to forbear visiting you so much as *once* in all this time! I, as well as every body else, to desert and abandon my dear creature to strangers! What will become of me, if you be as bad as my apprehensions make you!

I will set out this moment, little as the encouragement is that you give me to do so! My mother is willing I should. Why, O why, was she not *before* willing!

Yet she persuades me too (lest I should be fatally affected were I to find my fears too well justified) to wait the return of this messenger, who rides our swiftest horse.—God speed him with good news to me—else—but, Oh! my dearest, dearest friend, what else?—One line from your hand by him!—Send me but *one* line to bid me attend you! I will set out the moment, the very moment, I receive it. I am now actually ready to do so! And if you love me, as I love you, the sight of me will revive you to my hopes!—But why, why, when I can think this, did I not go up sooner?

I am sorry I was not at home, [I *must* add thus much, though the servant is ready mounted at the door,] when Mr. Belford's servant came with your affecting letter. I was at Miss Lloyd's. My mamma sent it to me; and I came home that instant. But he was gone. He would not stay, it seems. Yet I wanted to ask him a hundred thousand questions. But why delay I thus my messenger? I have a multitude of things to say to you—to advise with you about!—You shall direct me in every thing. I will obey the holding up of your finger. But if *you* leave me—what is the world, or anything in it, to

Your

ANNA HOWE,

THE effect this letter had on the lady, who is so near the end which the fair writer so much apprehends and deplores, obliged Mrs. Lovick to make many breaks in reading it, and many changes of voice.

This *is* a friend, said the divine lady, (taking the letter in her hand, and kissing it) worth wishing to live for.—O my dear Anna Howe! How uninterruptedly sweet and noble has been our friendship!—But we shall one day meet (and this hope must comfort us both) never to part again! Then, divested of the shades of body, shall we be all light and all mind!—Then how unalloyed, how perfect, will be our friendship! Our love then will have *one* and the same adorable object, and we shall enjoy it and each other to all eternity!

She said, her dear friend was so earnest for a line or two, that she fain would write, if she could : and she tried, but to no purpose. She could dictate, however, she believed ; and desired Mrs. Lovick would take pen and paper. Which she did, and then she dictated to *her*. I would have withdrawn ; but at her desire staid.

She wandered a good deal, at first. She took notice that she did. And when she got into a little train, not pleasing herself, she apologized to Mrs. Lovick for making her begin again and again ; and said, that the third time should go, let it be as it would.

She dictated the farewell part, without hesitation ; and when she came to the blessing and subscription, she took the pen, and dropping on her knees, supported by Mrs. Lovick, wrote the conclusion ; but Mrs. Lovick was forced to guide her hand.

Wedn. near 3 o'clock.

MY DEAREST MISS HOWE,

YOU must not be surprised—nor grieved—that Mrs. Lovick writes for me. Although I cannot obey you, and write with my *pen* yet my *heart* writes by hers—accept it so—it is the nearest to obedience I can !

And now what *ought* I to say ? What *can* I say ?—But why should you not know the truth ? Since soon you must—very soon.

Know then, and let your tears be those, if of pity, of *joyful* pity ! for I permit you to shed a few, to embalm, as I may say, a fallen blossom—know then, that the good doctor, and the pious clergyman, and the worthy apothecary, have just now—with joint benedictions—taken their last leave of me : and the former bids me hope—do, my dearest, let me say, *hope*—hope for my enlargement before to-morrow sun-set.

Adieu, therefore, my dearest friend !—Be this *your* consolation, as it is *mine*, that in God's good time we shall meet in a blessed eternity, never more to part !—Once more, then adieu,—and be happy !—Which a generous nature cannot be, unless—to its power—it makes others so too.

God forever bless you ! prays, dropt on my bended knees, although supported upon them,

Your obliged, grateful, affectionate,

CL. HARLOWE.

Thy servant is just come ; so I will close here. Thou art a merciless master. The two fellows' are *hattered* to death by thee, to use a female word ; and all female words, though we are not sure of their derivation, have very significant meanings. I believe, in their hearts, they wish the angel in the heaven that is

ready to receive her, and thee at thy proper place, that there might be an end of their *flurries*; another word of the same gender.

What a letter hast thou sent me !—Poor Lovelace !—is all the answer I will return.

Five o'clock.] Col. Morden is this moment arrived.

Mr. Belford. In Continuation.

Eight in the Evening.

I HAD but just time, in my former, to tell you, that Col. Morden was arrived. He was on horseback, attended by two servants, and alighted at the door, just as the clock struck five. Mrs. Smith was then below in the back shop, weeping her husband with her, who was as much affected as she; Mrs. Lovick having left them a little before, in tears likewise; for they had been bemoaning one another; joining in opinion, that the admirable lady would not live the night over. She had told them, it was *her* opinion too, for some numbnesses which she called the forerunners of death, and from an increased inclination to doze.

The colonel, as Mrs. Smith told me afterwards, asked with great impatience, the moment he alighted, How Miss Harlowe was? She answered, Alive; but, she feared, drawing on apace. Good God! said he, with his hands and eyes lifted up. Can I see her? My name is Morden. I have the honour to be nearly related to her. Step up, pray; and let her know [she is sensible, I hope] that I am here. Who is with her?

Nobody but her nurse, and Mrs. Lovick, a widow gentlewoman, who is as careful of her, as if she were her mother.

And *more* careful too, interrupted he, or she is not careful at all——

Except a gentleman be with her, one Mr. Belford, continued Mrs. Smith, who has been the best friend she has had.

If Mr. Belford be with her, surely I may—but pray step up, and let Mr. Belford know, that I shall take it for a favour to speak with him first.

Mrs. Smith came up to me in my new apartment. I had but just dispatched your servant, and was asking her nurse, if I might again be admitted? Who answered, that she was dozing in the elbow-chair, having refused to lie down, saying, she should soon, she hoped, lie down for good.

The colonel, who is really a fine gentleman, received me with great politeness. After the first compliments, my cousin, sir, said he, is more obliged to you than to any of her own family. For my part, I have been endeavouring to move so many rocks

in her favour ; and, little thinking the dear creature so very bad have neglected to attend her, as I ought to have done the moment I arrived ; and *would*, had I known how ill she was, and what a task I should have had with the family. But, sir, your friend has been excessively to blame ; and you, being so *intimately* his friend, has made her fare the worse for your civilities to her. But are there no hopes of her recovery ?

The doctors have left her with the melancholy declaration, that there are none.

Has she had good attendance, sir ? A skilful physician ? I hear these good folks have been very civil and obliging to her.

Who could be otherwise ? said Mrs. Smith, weeping : she is the sweetest lady in the world.

Mrs. Smith, at his request, stepped up, and brought us down word, that Mrs. Lovick and her nurse were with her ; and that she was in so sound a sleep, leaning upon the former in the elbow-chair, that she neither heard her enter the room, nor go out. The colonel begged, if not improper, that he might see her, though sleeping. He said, that his impatience would not let him stay till she awaked. Yet he would not have her disturbed : and should be glad to contemplate her sweet features, when she saw him not ; and asked, if she thought he could not go in, and come out, without disturbing her ?

She believed he might, she answered ; for her chair's back was towards the door.

He said, he would take care to withdraw, if she awoke, that his sudden appearance might not surprise her.

Mrs. Smith, stepping up before us, bid Mrs. Lovick and nurse not to stir, when we entered : and then we went up softly together.

We beheld the lady, in a charming attitude. Dressed, as I told you before, in her virgin white, she was sitting in her elbow-chair, Mrs. Lovick close by her in another chair, with her left arm round her neck, supporting it, as it were ; for, it seems, the lady had bid her do so, saying, she had been a mother to her, and she would delight herself in thinking she was in her mamma's arms ; for she found herself drowsy ; perhaps, she said, for the last time she should ever be so.

One faded cheek rested upon the good woman's bosom, the kindly warmth of which had over-spread it with a faint, but charming flush ; the other paler, and hollow, as if already iced over by death. Her hands white as the lily, with her meandering veins more transparently blue than ever I had seen even hers, (veins so soon, alas ! to be choaked up by the congealment of that purple stream, which already so languidly creeps, rather than flows through them !) her hands hanging lifelessly, one before her, the

other grasped by the right hand of the kind widow, whose tears bedewed the sweet face which her motherly bosom supported, though unfelt by the fair sleeper; and either insensibly to the good woman, or what she would not disturb her to wipe off, or to change her posture: her aspect was sweetly calm and serene; and though she started now-and-then, yet her sleep seemed easy; her breath indeed short and quick; but tolerably free, and not like that of a dying person.

In this heart-moving attitude she appeared to us when we approached her, and came to have her lovely face before us.

The colonel, sighing often, gazed upon her with his arms folded, and with the most profound and affectionate attention; till at last, on her starting, and fetching her breath with greater difficulty than before, he retired to a screen, that was drawn before her *house*, as she calls it, which, as I have heretofore observed, stands under one of the windows. This screen was placed there, at the time she found herself obliged to take to her chamber; and, in the depth of our concern, and the fulness of other discourse at our first interview, I had forgotten to apprise the colonel of what he would probably see.

Retiring thither, he drew out his handkerchief, and, overwhelmed with grief, seemed unable to speak: but, on casting his eye behind the screen, he soon broke silence; for, struck with the shape of the coffin, he lifted up a purplish-coloured cloth that was spread over it, and, starting back, Good God! said he, what's here!

I ought, said I (stepping softly up to him, the lady again falling into a dose) to have apprised you of this. I was here when it was brought in, and never was so shocked in my life. But she had none of her friends about her, and no reason to hope for any of them to come near her; and, assured she should not recover, she was resolved to leave as little as possible, especially as to what related to her person, to her executor. But it is not a shocking object to her, though it be to every body else.

The lady fetched a profound sigh, and, starting, it broke off our talk; and the colonel then withdrew farther behind the screen, that his sudden appearance might not surprise her.

Where am I? said she. How drowsy I am! How long have I dozed? Don't go, sir (for I was retiring). I am very stupid, and shall be more and more so, I suppose.

She then offered to raise herself; but being ready to faint through weakness, was forced to sit down again, reclining her head on her chair back; and, after a few moments, I believe now, my good friends, said she, all your kind trouble will soon be over. I have slept, but am not refreshed, and my fingers' end seem numbed—have no feeling! (holding them up)—'tis time to send the letter to my good Norton.

Shall I, madam, send my servant post with it?

O no, sir, I thank you. It will reach the dear woman too soon (as she will think) by the post.

I told her, this was not post day.

Is it Wednesday still, she said? Bless me! I know not how the time goes: but very tediously. 'tis plain. And now I think I must soon take to my bed. All will be most conveniently, and with least trouble, over there—will it not, Mrs. Lovick?—I think, sir, turning to me, I have left nothing to these last incapacitating hours. Nothing either to say, or to do, I bless God, I have not. If I *had*, how unhappy should I be? Can you, sir, remind me of any thing necessary to be done or said to make your office easy?

She motioned to rise; but was ready to faint again, and forced to sit still.

The colonel was in a perfect agitation behind the screen, to hear this discourse; and twice, unseen by his cousin, was coming from it towards her; but retreated, for fear of surprising her too much.

I stept to him, and favoured his retreat; she only saying, Are you going, Mr. Belford? Are you sent for down? Is my cousin come? For she heard somebody step softly cross the room, and thought it to be me; her hearing being more perfect than her sight.

I told her, I believed he was; and she said, We must make the best of it, Mrs. Lovick, and Mrs. Smith. I shall otherwise most grievously shock my poor cousin; for he loved me dearly once. Pray give me a few of the doctors last drops in water, to keep up my spirits for this one interview; and that is all, I believe, that can concern me now.

The colonel (who heard all this) sent in his name; and I, pretending to go down to him, introduced the afflicted gentleman; she having first ordered the screen to be put as close to the window as possible, that he might not see what was behind it; while he, having heard what she had said about it, was determined to take no notice of it.

He folded the angel in his arms as she sat, dropping down on one knee; for, supporting herself upon the two elbows of the chair, she attempted to rise, but could not. Excuse, my dear cousin, said she, excuse me, that I cannot stand up—I did not expect this favour now. But I am glad of this opportunity to thank you for all your generous goodness to me.

I never, my best beloved and dearest cousin, said he (with eyes running over) shall forgive myself, that I did not attend you sooner. Little did I think you were so ill; nor do any of your friends believe it. If they did—

If they did, repeated she, interrupting him, I should have had

more compassion from them. I am sure I should. But pray, sir, how did you leave them? Are *you* reconciled to them? If you are not, I beg, if you love your poor Clarissa, that you will: for every widened difference augments but my fault: since *that* is the foundation of all.

I had been expecting to hear from them in your favour, my dear cousin, said he, for some hours, when this gentleman's letter arrived, which hastened me up; but I have the account of your grandfather's estate to make up with you, and have bills and drafts upon their banker for the sums due to you: which they desire you may receive, lest you should have occasion for money. And this is such an earnest of an approaching reconciliation, that I dare to answer for all the rest being according to your wishes, if—

Ah! sir, interrupted she, with frequent breaks and pauses, I wish, I wish, this does not rather shew, that were I to live, they would have nothing more to say to me. I never had any pride in being independent of them: all my actions, when I might have made myself *more* independent, shew this—but what avails these reflections now?—I only beg, sir, that you, and *this* gentleman—to whom I am exceedingly obliged—will adjust those matters—according to the will I have written.

Hereupon we both withdrew, leaving word, that we would be at the Bedford Head, if any thing extraordinary happened.

We bespoke a little repast, having neither of us dined; and, while it was getting ready, you may guess at the subject of our discourse. Both joined in lamentations for the lady's desperate state: admired her manifold excellencies: severely condemned you, and her friends. Yet to bring him into better opinion of you, I read to him some passages from your last letters, which shewed your concern for the wrongs you had done her and your deep remorse: and he said, It was a dreadful thing to labour under the sense of a guilt so irremediable.

We procured Mr. Goddard (Dr. H. not being at home) once more to visit her, and call upon us in his return. He was so good as to do so; but he tarried with her not five minutes; and told us, That she was drawing on apace; that he feared she would not live till morning: and that she wished to see Colonel Morden directly.

Ten o'clock.

The colonel sent to me afterwards, to tell me, that the lady having been in convulsions, he was so much disordered, that he could not possibly attend me.

I have sent every half hour to know how she does: and just now I have the pleasure to hear, that her convulsions have left her and that she is gone to rest in a much quieter way than could be expected.

Her poor cousin is very much indisposed ; yet will not stir out of the house while she is in such a way ; but intends to lie down on a couch, having refused any other accommodation.

Mr. Belford. In Continuation.

Soho, six o'clock, Sept. 7.

THE lady is still alive. The colonel having just sent his servant to let me know that she inquired after me about an hour ago.—I am dressing to attend her. Joel begs of me to dispatch him back, though but with one line to gratify your present impatience. He expects, he says, to find you at Knightsbridge, let him make what haste he can back ; and if he has not a line or two to pacify you, he is afraid you will pistol him ; for he apprehends that you are hardly yourself. I therefore dispatch this ; and will have another ready as soon as I can, with particulars. But you must have a little patience ; for how can I withdraw every half hour to write, if I am admitted to the lady's presence, or if I am with the colonel.

Smith's, Ten o'clock.

The colonel being earnest to see his cousin as soon as she awoke, we were both admitted. We observed in her, as soon as we entered, strong symptoms of her approaching dissolution, notwithstanding what the women had flattered us with from her last night's tranquillity. The colonel and I, each loth to say what we thought, looked upon one another with melancholy countenances.

The colonel told her, He should send a servant to her uncle Antony's for some papers he had left there ; and asked, If she had any commands that way ?

She thought not, she said, speaking more inwardly than she did the day, before. She had indeed a letter ready to be sent to her good Norton ; and there was a request intimated in it : but it was time enough, if the request were signified to those whom it concerned when all was over. However, it might be sent then by the servant who was going that way. And she caused it to be given to the colonel for that purpose.

Her breath being very short, she desired another pillow. Having two before, this made her in a manner sit up in her bed ; and she spoke then with more distinctness ; and seeing us greatly concerned, forgot her own sufferings to comfort us ; and a charming lecture she gave us, though a brief one, upon the happiness of a timely preparation, and upon the hazards of a late repentance, when the mind, as she observed, was so much weakened, as well as the body, as to render a poor soul hardly able to contend with its natural infirmities.

She then repeated her request, in the most earnest manner, to her *cousin*, that he would not *heighten* her fault, by seeking to avenge her death; to *me*, that I would endeavour to make up all breaches, and use the power I had with my friend, to prevent all future mischief *from* him, as well as that which this trust might give *me*, to prevent any to him.

She had fatigued herself so much (growing sensibly weaker) that she sunk her head upon her pillows, ready to faint; and we withdrew to the window, looking upon one another, but could not tell what to say; and yet both seemed inclinable to speak: but the motion passed over in silence. Our eyes only spoke; and that in a manner neither's were used to; mine, at least, not till I knew this admirable creature.

The colonel withdrew to dismiss his messenger, and send away the letter to Mrs. Norton. I took the opportunity to retire likewise; and to write thus far. And Joel returning to take it, I now close here.

Eleven o'clock.

Mr. Belford. In continuation.

THE colonel tells me, That he has written to Mr. John Harlowe by his servant, "That they might spare themselves the trouble of debating about reconciliation; for that his dear cousin would probably be no more, before they could resolve."

He asked me after his cousin's means of subsisting; and whether she had accepted of any favour from *me*: He was sure, he said, she would not from *you*.

I acquainted him of the truth of her parting with some of her apparel.

This wrung his heart, and bitterly did he exclaim as well against you, as against her implacable relations.

He wished he had not come to England at all, or had come sooner; and hoped I would apprise him of the whole mournful story, at a proper season. He added, that he had thoughts when he came over, of fixing here for the remainder of his days: but now as it was impossible his cousin could recover, he would go abroad again, and resettle himself at Florence or Leghorn.

* * * *

The lady has been giving orders, with great presence of mind, about her body: directing her nurse, and the maid of the house, to put her into her coffin as soon as she is cold. Mr. Belford, she said, would know the rest by her will.

* * * *

She has just now given from her bosom, where she always

wore it, a miniature picture set in gold of Miss Howe: she gave it to Mrs. Lovick, desiring her to fold it up in white paper, and direct it, *To Charles Hickman, Esq.* and to give it to me, when she was departed, for that gentleman.

She looked upon the picture, before she gave it her—*Sweet and ever amiable friend—companion—sister—lover!* said she—and kissed it four several times, once at each tender appellation.

* * * *

Your other servant is come.—Well may you be impatient!—Well may you!—But do you think I can leave off in the middle of a conversation, to run and set down what offers, and send it away piece-meal as I write?—If I *could*, must I not lose, one half, while, I put down the other?

Your poor fellow, who says that he begs for *his life* in desiring to be dispatched back with a letter, tears this from me—else perhaps (for I am just sent for down) a quarter of an hour would make you—not *easy* indeed—but *certain*—and that, in a *state* like yours, to a *mind* like yours, is a relief.

Thursday afternoon, 4 o'clock.

Mr. Belford to Richard Mowbray, Esq.

Thursday afternoon.

DEAR MOWBRAY,

I AM glad to hear you are in town. Throw yourself the moment this comes to your hand (if possible with Tourville) in the way of the man who least of all men deserves the love of the worthy heart; but most that of thine and Tourville: else, the news I shall most probably send him within an hour or two, will make annihilation the greatest blessing he has to wish for.

You will find him between Piccadilly and Kensington, most probably on horseback, riding backwards and forwards in a crazy way; or put up, perhaps, at some inn or tavern in the way; a waiter possibly, if so, watching for his servant's return to him from me.

* * * *

His man Will is just come to me. He will carry this to you in his way back, and be your director. Hie away in a coach, or any how. Your being with him may save either his or a servant's life. See the blessed effects of triumphant libertinism! Sooner or later it comes home to us, and all concludes in gall and bitterness! Adieu.

J. BELFORD.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

CURSE upon the colonel, and curse upon the writer of the last letter I received, and upon all the world! Thou to pretend to be as much interested in my Clarissa's fate as myself! 'Tis well for one of us, that this was not said to me, instead of written—living or dying, she is mine—and only mine. Have I not earned her dearly?—Is not d—nation likely to be the purchase to me, though a happy eternity will be hers?

An eternal separation! O God! O God!—How can I bear that thought!—But yet there is life!—Yet, therefore, hope—enlarge my hope, and thou shalt be my good genius, and I will forgive thee everything.

For this last time—but it must not, shall not, be the *last*—let me hear the moment thou receivest this—what I *am* to be—for, at present, I am

The most miserable of men.

Rose at Knightsbridge, 3 o'clock.

My fellow tells me, that thou art sending Mowbray and Tourville to me. I want them not. My soul's sick of them, and of all the world; but most of myself. Yet, as they send me word they will come immediately, I will wait for them, and for thy next. O Belford! let it not be—but hasten it, hasten it, be what it may!

Mr. Belford to Robert Lovelace, Esq.

Seven o'clock, Thursday even., Sept. 7.

I HAVE only to say at present—thou wilt do well to take a tour to Paris; or wherever else thy destiny shall lead thee!!!—

JOHN BELFORD.

Mr. Mowbray to John Belford, Esq.

Uxbridge, Sept. 7, between 11 and 12 at night.

DEAR JACK,

I SEND by poor Lovelace's desire, for *particulars* of the fatal breviate thou sendest him this night. He cannot bear to set pen to paper; yet wants to know every minute passage of Miss Harlowe's departure. Yet, why he should, I cannot see; for if she is gone, she is gone; and who can help it?

I never heard of such a woman in my life. What great matters has she suffered, that grief should kill her thus?

Will brought him the letter just after we had joined him at the Bohemia Head; where he had left word at the Rose at Knightsbridge he should be; for he had been sauntering up and down, backwards and forwards, expecting us and his fellow. Will, as soon as he delivered it, got out of his way: and when he opened it, never was such a piece of scenery. He trembled like a devil at receiving it; fumbled at a seal, his fingers in a palsy, like Tom Doleman's: his hand shake, shake, shake, that he tore the letter in two, before he could come at the contents: and, when he had read them, off went his hat to one corner of the room.—D—nation seize the world! and a whole volley of such like *execrations* wishes; running up and down the room, and throwing up the sash, and pulling it down and smiting his forehead with his double fist, with such force as would have felled an ox, and stamping and tearing, that the landlord ran in, and faster out again. And this was the *distraction scene* for sometime.

In vain was all Tourville or I could say to him. I offered once to take hold of his hands because he was going to do himself a mischief, as I believed, looking about for his pistols, which he had laid upon the table, but which Will, unseen, had taken out with him [a faithful honest dog, that Will! I shall for ever love the fellow for it] and he hit me a d—n'd dowse of the chops, as made my nose bleed. 'Twas well 'twas he; for I hardly knew how to take it.

And you know, Jack, (as we told him, moreover) that it was a shame to manhood, for a man, who had served twenty and twenty women as bad or worse, let him have served Miss Harlowe never so bad should give himself such *obstrepulous* airs, because she would die: and we advised him never to attempt a woman proud of her character and *virtue*, as they call it, any more: for why? The conquest did not pay trouble; and what was there in one woman more than another? Hey, you know, Jack and thus we comforted him, and advised him.

But yet his d—n'd addled pate runs upon this lady as much now she's dead, as it did when she was living. For, I suppose, Jack, it is no joke: she is certainly and *bona fide* dead: i'n't she? If not, thou deservest to be doubly d—n'd for thy fooling, I tell thee that. So he will have me write for the particulars of her *departure*.

He won't bear the word *dead* on any account. A squeamish puppy! How love unmans and softens! And such a noble fellow as this too! Rot him for an idiot, and an oaf! I have no patience with the foolish *duncical* dog—upon my soul, I have not!

So send the account, and let him howl over it, as I suppose he will.

But he must and shall go abroad: and in a month or two Jenny, and you, and I, we'll join him, and he'll soon get the better of this chicken-hearted folly, never fear; and will then be ashamed of himself: and then we'll not spare him; though *now*, poor fellow, it were pity to *lay him on so thick* as he deserves. And do thou, till then, spare all reflections upon him; for, it seems, thou hast *worked him* unmercifully.

I was willing to give thee some account of the hand we have had with the tearing fellow, who had certainly been a lost man, had we not been with him; or he would have killed somebody or other. I have no doubt of it. And *now* he is but very middling; sits grinning like a man in straw; curses and swears, and is confounded gloomy; and creeps into holes and corners, like an old hedge-hog hunted for his grease.

R. MOWBRAY.

Mr. Belford to Robert Lovelace, Esq.

Thursday night.

I MAY as well try to write, since, were I to go to bed, I shall not sleep. I never had such a weight of grief upon my mind in my life, as upon the demise of this admirable woman, whose soul is now rejoicing in the regions of light.

You may be glad to know the particulars of her happy exit, I will try to proceed; for all is hush and still; the family retired: but not one of them, and least of all her poor cousin, I dare say to rest.

At four o'clock, as I mentioned in my last, I was sent for down:

The lady had been silent a few minutes, and speechless as they thought, moving her lips without uttering a word; one hand, as I said, in her cousin's. But when Mrs. Lovick on my approach pronounced my name, O! Mr. Belford, said she, with a faint inward voice, but very distinct nevertheless—Now!—Now! [in broken periods she spoke]—I bless God for his mercies to his poor creature—will all soon be over—a few—a very few moments—will end this strife—and I shall be happy.

Comfort here, sir—turning her head to the colonel—comfort my cousin—see! the blame—able kindness—he would not wish me to be happy—so soon!

Here she stopt, for two or three minutes, earnestly looking upon him: then resuming, My dearest cousin, said she, be comforted—what is dying but the common lot?—The mortal frame may *seem* to labour—but that is all!—It is not so hard to die, as I believed it to be!—The preparation is the difficulty—I bless God,

I have had time for that—the rest is worse to beholders, than to me!—I am all blessed hope—hope itself. She *looked* what she said, a sweet smile beaming over her countenance.

After a short silence, Once more, my dear cousin, said she, but still in broken accents, commend me most dutifully to my father and mother—there she stopt. And then proceeding—To my sister, to my brother, to my uncles—and tell them, I bless them with my parting breath—for all their goodness to me—even for their displeasure—I bless them—most happy has been to me my punishment *here!* Happy indeed!

She was silent for a few moments, lifting up her eyes, and the hand her cousin held not between his. Then, *O death!* said she, *where is thy sting!* And after a pause—*It is good for me that I was afflicted!* Words of Scripture, I suppose.

Then turning towards us, who were lost in speechless sorrow—O dear, dear gentleman, said she, you know not what *foretastes*—what *assurances*—and there she again stopped, and looked up, as if in a thankful rapture, sweetly smiling.

Then turning her head towards me—Do you, sir, tell your friend, that I forgive him! And I pray to God to forgive him!—Again pausing, and lifting up her eyes, as if praying that he would. Let him know how happily I die!—And that such as my own, I wish to be his last hour.

She was again silent for a few moments: and then resuming—My sight fails me!—Your voices only—[for we both applauded her Christian, her divine frame, though in accents as broken as her own]: and the voice of grief is alike in all. Is not this Mr. Morden's hand? pressing one of his with that he had just let go. Which is Mr. Belford's? holding out the other. I gave her mine. God almighty bless you both, said she, and make you both—in your last hour—for you *must* come to this—happy as I am.

But soon shewing signs of returning life, our attention was again engaged; and I besought her, when a little recovered, to complete in my favour her half-pronounced blessing. She waved her hand to us both, and bowed her head six several times, as we have since recollected, as if distinguishing every person present; not forgetting the nurse and the maid-servant; the latter having approached the bed, weeping, as if crowding in for the divine lady's last blessing: and she spoke faltering and inwardly—Bless—bless—bless—you all—and—now—and now—[holding up her almost lifeless hands for the last time] Come—O come—blessed Lord—Jesus!

And with these words, the last but half-pronounced, expired:—such a smile, such a charming serenity overspreading her sweet face at the instant, as seemed to manifest her eternal happiness already begun.

* * * *

Two letters are just brought by a servant in livery, directed to *Miss Clarissa Harlowe*. I will send copies of them to you. The contents are enough to make one mad. How would this poor lady have rejoiced to receive them!—And yet, if she had, she would not have been enabled to say, as she nobly did, *That God would not let her depend for comfort upon any but himself*.

Mrs Norton to Miss Clarissa Harlowe.

Wednesday, Sept. 6.

At length, my best beloved Miss Clary, every thing is in the wished-for train : for all your relations are unanimous in your favour. Even your brother and sister are with the foremost to be reconciled to you.

I knew it must end thus ! By patience and persevering sweetness, what a triumph have you gained ! This happy change is owing to letters received from your physician, from your cousin Morden, and from Mr. Brand.

Colonel Morden will be with you no doubt before this can reach you, with his pocket book filled with money-bills, that nothing may be wanting to make you easy.

And *now*, all our hopes, all our prayers, are, that this good news may restore you to spirits and health ; and that (so long withheld) it may not come to late.

I know how much your dutiful heart will be raised with the joyful tidings I write you, and still, shall more particularly tell you of, when I have the happiness to see you : which will be by next Saturday, at farthest ; perhaps on Friday afternoon, by the time you can receive this.

For this day, being sent for by the general voice, I was received by every one with great goodness and condescension, and *entreated* (for that was the word they were pleased to use, when I needed no entreaty, I am sure) to hasten up to you, and to assure you of all their affectionate regards to you : and your father bid me say all the kind things that were in my *heart* to say, in order to comfort and raise you up, and they would hold themselves bound to make them good.

They will prescribe no conditions to you, my dear young lady, but will leave all to your own duty and discretion. Only your brother and sister declare, they will never yield to call Mr. Lovelace brother : nor will your father, I believe, be easily brought to think of him for a son.

I am to bring you down with me as soon as your health and inclination will permit. You will be received with open arms

Every one longs to see you. All the servants please themselves, that they shall be permitted to kiss your hands.

God preserve you to our happy meeting ! And I will, if I may say so, weary Heaven with my incessant prayers to preserve and restore you afterwards !

I need not say how much I am, my dear young lady,
Your ever-affectionate, and devoted
JUDITH NORTON.

Miss Arab. Harlowe to Miss Cl. Harlowe.

Wednesday morning, Sept. 6.

DEAR SISTER !

(We have just heard that you are exceedingly ill. We all loved you as never young creature was loved : you are sensible of that, sister Clary. And you have been very naughty—but we could not be angry always.)

We are indeed more afflicted with the news of your being so very ill than I can express : for I see not but, after this separation (as we understand that your misfortune has been greater than your fault, and, that, however unhappy, you have demeaned yourself like the good young creature you used to be) we shall love you better, if possible, than ever.

Take comfort, therefore, sister Clary, and don't be too much cast down—whatever your mortifications may be from such noble prospects over-clouded, and from the reflections you may have from *within*, on your faulty step, and from the sully of such a charming character by it, you will receive none from *any of us* : and, as an earnest of your papa's and mamma's favour and reconciliation, they assure you by me of their blessing and hourly prayers.

If it will be any comfort to you, and my mother finds this letter is received as we expect (which we shall know by the good effect it will have upon your health) she will herself go to town to you. Meantime, the good woman you so dearly love will be hastened up to you ; and she writes by this opportunity, to acquaint you of it, and of all our returning love.

I hope you will rejoice at this good news. Pray let us hear that you do. Your next grateful letter on this occasion, especially if it gives us the pleasure of hearing you are better upon this news, will be received with the same (if not greater) delight, than we used to have in all your prettily penn'd epistles. Adieu, my dear Clary ! I am,

Your loving sister, and true friend,
ARABELLA HARLOWE.

Mr. Belford to Robert Lovelace, Esq.

Friday night, Sept. 8, past ten.

I WILL now take up the account of our proceedings, from my letter of last night, which contained the dying words of this incomparable lady.

In the morning between seven and eight o'clock, according to appointment, the colonel came to me here. He was very much indisposed. We went together, accompanied by Mrs. Lovick and Mrs. Smith, into the deceased's chamber.

I unlocked the drawer, in which (as I mentioned in a former) she had deposited her papers. I told you in mine of Monday last, that she had the night before sealed up with three black seals, a parcel inscribed, *As soon as I am certainly dead, this to be broke open by Mr. Belford*. I accused myself for not having done it over night. But really I was then incapable of any thing.

I broke it open accordingly, and found in it no less than eleven letters, each sealed with her own seal, and black wax, one of which was directed to me.

I will inclose a copy of it.

TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

SIR,

Sunday evening, Sept. 3.

I TAKE this last and solemn occasion to repeat to you my thanks for all your kindness to me at a time when I most needed countenance and protection.

A few considerations I beg leave, as *now* at your perusal of this, from the dead, to press upon you, with all the warmth of a sincere friendship.

Let me beg of you, for *my sake*, who AM, or, as *now* you will best read it, *have been*, driven to the necessity of applying to you to be the executor of my will, that you will bear, according to that generosity which I think to be in you, with all my friends, and particularly with my brother, (who is really a worthy young man, but perhaps a little too headstrong in his first resentments and conceptions of things) if any thing, by reason of this trust, should fall out disagreeably; and that you will study to make peace, and to reconcile all parties; and more especially, that you, who seem to have a great influence upon your *still more* headstrong friend, will interpose, if occasion be, to prevent *further* mischief—for, surely, sir, that violent spirit may sit down satisfied with the evils he has already wrought; and, particularly, with the wrongs, the

heinous and ignoble wrongs, he has in me done to my family wounded in the tenderest part of its honour.

I have another request to make to you : it is only, that you will be pleased, by a particular messenger, to forward the inclosed letters as directed.

And now, sir, having the presumption to think that an *useful* member is lost to society by means of the unhappy step which has brought my life so soon to its period, let me hope, that I may be an humble instrument in the hands of Providence, to reform a man of your abilities ; and then I shall think that loss will be more abundantly repaired to the world, while it will be, by God's goodness, my gain : and I shall have this farther hope, that once more I shall have an opportunity, in a blessed eternity, to thank you, as I now repeatedly do, for the good you have done to, and the trouble you will have taken for, sir,

Your obliged servant,
CLARISSA HARLOWE.

The other letters are directed, to her father, to her mother, one to her two uncles, to her brother, to her sister, to her aunt Hervey, to her cousin Morden, to Miss Howe, to Mrs. Norton, and lastly one to you, in performance of her promise, *that a letter should be sent you when she arrived at her father's house* !——I will withhold this last till I can be assured, that you will be fitter to receive it than Tourville tells me you are at present.

Copies of all these are sealed up, and entitled. *Copies of my ten posthumous letters, for F. Belford. Esq.*, and put in among the bundle of papers left to my direction, which I have not yet had leisure to open,

I gave the colonel his letter, and ordered Harry instantly to get ready to carry the others. Meantime (retiring into the next apartment) we opened the will. We were both so much affected in perusing it, that at one time the colonel, breaking off, gave it to me to read on ; at another I gave it back to him to proceed with ; neither of us being able to read it through without such tokens of sensibility as affected the voice of each.

The colonel told me, he was ready to account with me for the money and bills he had brought up from Harlowe Place ; which would enable me, as he said, directly to execute the legacy-parts of the will : and he would needs at that instant force into my hands a paper relating to that subject. I put it into my pocket-book, without looking at it ; telling him, that as I hoped he would do all in his power to promote a literal performance of the will, I must beg his advice and assistance in the execution of it.

Her request to be buried with her ancestors, made a letter of

the following import necessary, which I prevailed upon the colonel to write ; being unwilling myself (so *early* at least) to appear officious in the eye of a family which probably wishes not any communication with me.

To James Harlowe, Jun. Esq.

SIR,

THE letter which the bearer of this brings with him, will, I presume, make it unnecessary to acquaint you and my cousins with the death of the most excellent of women. But I am requested by her executor, who will soon send you a copy of her last will, to acquaint her father (which I choose to do by your means) that in it she earnestly desires to be laid in the family-vault, at the feet of her grandfather.

If her father will not admit of it, she has directed her body to be buried in the church-yard of the parish where she died.

I need not tell you, that a speedy answer to this is necessary.

Her beatification commenced yesterday afternoon, exactly at forty minutes after six.

I can write no more, than that I am

Yours, &c.

WM. MORDEN.

Mr. Belford, In continuation.

Sat. ten o'clock.

POOR Mrs. Norton is come, She was set down at the door ; and would have gone up stairs directly. But Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Lovick being together and in tears, and the former hinting too suddenly to the truly venerable woman the fatal news, she sunk down at her feet in fits, so that they were forced to breathe a vein, to bring her to herself, and to a capacity of exclamation : and then she ran on to Mrs. Lovick and me, who entered just as she recovered, in praise of the lady, in lamentations for her, and invectives against you !

I thought it would divert the poor gentlewoman, and not altogether unsuitably, if I were to put her upon furnishing mourning for herself ; as it would rouse her, by a seasonable and necessary employment, from that dismal lethargy of grief, which generally succeeds the too violent anguish with which a gentle nature is accustomed to be torn upon the first communication of the unexpected loss of a dear friend. I gave her therefore the thirty guineas bequeathed to her and to her son for mourning ; the only mourning which the testatrix has mentioned and desired her to lose no time in preparing her own, as I doubted not, that she

would accompany the corpse, if it were permitted to be carried down.

* * * *

I HAVE been dipping into the copies of the posthumous letters to the family, which Harry has carried down. Well may I call this lady divine. They are all calculated to give comfort rather than reproach, though their cruelty to her merited nothing *but* reproach. But were I in any of their places, how much rather had I, that she had quitted scores with me by the most severe recrimination, than that she should thus nobly triumph over me by a generosity that has no example? I will inclose some of them which I desire you to return as soon as you can.

To the ever-honoured James Harlowe, sen. Esq.

MOST DEAR SIR,

WITH exulting confidence now does your emboldened daughter come into your awful presence by these lines, who dared not, but upon this occasion, to look up to you with hopes of favour and forgiveness; since, when this comes to your hands, it will be out of her power ever to offend you more.

And now let me bless you, my honoured father, and bless you as I write, upon my knees, for all the benefits I have received from your indulgence: for your fond love to me in the days of my prattling innocence: for the virtuous education you gave me: and for, the crown of all, the happy end, which, through divine grace, by means of that virtuous education, I hope, by the time you will receive this, I shall have made. And let me beg of you, dear venerable sir, to blot from your remembrance, if possible, the last unhappy eight months; and then I shall hope to be remembered with advantage for the pleasure you had the goodness to take in your Clarissa.

Still on her knees, let your poor penitent implore your forgiveness of all her faults and follies; more especially of that fatal error which threw her out of your protection.

When you know, sir, that I have never been faulty in my will: that ever since my calamity became irretrievable, I have been in a state of preparation; that I have the strongest assurance, that the Almighty has accepted my unfeigned repentance; and that by this time you will (as I humbly presume to hope) have been the means of adding one to the number of the blessed: you will have reason for joy rather than sorrow. Since, had I escaped the snares by which I was entangled, I might have wanted those exercises which I look upon now as so many mercies dispensed to wean me betimes from the world that presented itself to me with prospects

too alluring: and in that case (too easily satisfied with *worldly* felicity) I might not have attained to that blessedness, in which now, on your reading of this, I humbly presume (through the divine goodness) I am rejoicing.

That the Almighty, in his own good time, will bring you, sir, and my ever-honoured mother, after a series of earthly felicities, of which may my unhappy fault be the only interruption (and very grievous I know that must have been), to rejoice in the same blessed state, is the repeated prayer of, sir,

Your now happy daughter.

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

To the ever-honoured Mrs. Harlowe.

HONOURED MADAM.

THE last time I had the boldness to write to you, it was with all the consciousness of a self-convicted criminal, supplicating her offended judge for mercy and pardon. I now, by these lines, approach you with more assurance; but nevertheless with the highest degree of reverence, gratitude, and duty. The reason of my assurance, my letter to my father will give: and as I humbly on my knees implored *his* pardon, so now in the same dutiful manner, do I supplicate yours, for the grief and trouble I have given you.

Every vein of my heart has bled for an unhappy rashness, which (although involuntary as to the act) from the moment it was committed, carried with it its own punishment; and was accompanied with a true and sincere penitence.

God, who has been a witness of my distresses, knows that great as they have been, the greatest of all was the distress that I knew I must have given to you, madam, and to my father, by a step that had so very faulty an appearance in your eyes, and his; and indeed in the eyes of all my family; a step so unworthy of *your* daughter, and of the education you had given her!

But, HE, I presume to hope, has forgiven me; and at the instant this will reach your hands, I humbly trust, I shall be rejoicing in the blessed fruits of his forgiveness. And be this your comfort, my ever-honoured mother, that the principal end of your pious care of me is attained, though not in the way so much hoped for.

May the grief which my fatal error has given to you both, be the only grief that shall ever annoy you in this world!—May you, madam, long live to sweeten the cares, and heighten the comforts of my father!—May my sister's continued and if possible augmented duty, happily make up to you the loss you have sustained in me! And whenever my brother and she change their single state

may it be with such satisfaction to you both, as may make you forget my offence; and remember me only in those days, in which you took pleasure in me! And, at last, may a happy meeting with your forgiven penitent, in the eternal mansions, augment the bliss of her, who, purified by sufferings, already, when this salutes your hands, presumes she shall be

The happy, and for ever happy

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

[Mr. Belford gives the posthumous letters to her brother and sister, to her two uncles, and to Mrs. Hervey, Miss Howe, and Mrs. Norton; but although every letter varies in style as well as in matter, yet as they are on the same subject and in the same strain as the two preceding, they are omitted.—Ed.]

Mr. Belford to Robert Lovelace, Esq.

Saturday, night.

YOUR servant gives me a dreadful account of your raving unmanageableness. I wonder not at it. But as nothing violent is lasting, I dare say, that your habitual gaiety of heart will quickly get the better of your frenzy: and the rather do I judge so, as your fits are of the raving kind, (suitable to your natural impetuosity) and not of that melancholy species which seizes slower souls.

For this reason I will proceed in writing to you, that my narrative may not be broken by your discomposure; and that the contents of it may *find you*, and help you to reflection, when you shall be restored.

Harry is returned from carrying the posthumous letters to the family, and to Miss Howe; and that of the colonel, which acquaints James Harlowe with his sister's death, and with her desire to be interred near her grandfather.

Harry was not admitted into the presence of any of the family. They were all assembled together, it seems, at Harlowe Place, on occasion of the colonel's letter, which informed them of the lady's dangerous way; and were comforting themselves, as Harry was told, with hopes that Mr. Morden had made the worst of her state, in order to quicken their resolutions.

It is easy then to judge what must be their grief and surprise on receiving the fatal news which the letter Harry sent in to them communicated.

He staid there long enough to find the whole house in confusion; the servants running different ways; lamenting and wringing their hands as they ran; the female servants particularly, as if somebody (poor Mrs. Harlowe, no doubt, and perhaps Mrs. Hervey too) were in fits.

The answer which James Harlowe returned to Colonel Morden's letter of notification of his sister's death, and to her request as to her interment, will give a faint idea of what their concern must be.—Here follows a copy of it.

TO WILLIAM MORDEN, ESQ.

DEAR COUSIN,

Saturday, Sept. 9.

I CANNOT find words to express what we all suffer on the most mournful news that ever was communicated to us.

My sister Arabella (but, alas ! I have now no *other* sister) was preparing to follow Miss Norton up ; and I had resolved to escort her, and to have looked in upon the dear creature.

God be merciful to us all ! To what purpose did the doctor write, if she was so near her end ?—Why, as every body says, did he not send sooner ?—or why, at all ?

The most admirable young creature that ever swerved !—Not one friend to be with her !—Alas ! sir, I fear my mother will never get over this shock.—She has been in hourly fits ever since she received the fatal news. My poor father has the gout thrown into his stomach ; and Heaven knows—O cousin, O sir !—I meant nothing but the honour of the family ! yet have I all the weight thrown upon me—[O this cursed Lovelace ! may I perish if he escape the deserved vengeance !]

We had begun to please ourselves that we should soon see her here—good Heaven ! that her next entrance into this house, after she abandoned us so precipitately, should be in a coffin.

We can have nothing to do with her executor : (another strange step of the dear creature's !) he cannot expect we will—nor, if he be a gentleman, will he think of acting. Do you therefore be pleased, sir, to order the undertaker to convey the body down to us. My mother says, she shall be for ever unhappy, if she may not in death see the dear creature whom she could not see in life : be so kind therefore as to direct the lid to be only half-screwed down—that (if my poor mother cannot be prevailed upon to dispense with so shocking a spectacle) she may be obliged—she was the darling of her heart !

If we know her will in relation to the funeral, it shall be punctually complied with : as shall every thing in it that is fit or reasonable to be performed ; and this without the intervention of strangers.

Your inexpressibly afflicted cousin and servant.

J. A. HARLOWE, Jun.

• The words thus inclosed [] were omitted in the transcript to Mr. Lovelace.

Every thing that's fit or reasonable to be preformed ! [repeated I to the colonel from the above letter on his reading it to me :] that is every thing which she has directed, that *can* be performed. I hope, colonel, that I shall have no contention with them. I wish no more for *their* acquaintance than they do for *mine*. But you, sir, must be the mediator between them and me ; for I shall insist upon a literal performance in every article.

The colonel was so kind as to declare that he would support me in my resolution.

Mr. Belford to Robert Lovelace, Esq.

Sunday morn. eight o'clock, Sept. 10.

I STAID at Smith's till I saw the last of all that is mortal of the divine lady.

As she had directed rings by her will to several persons, with her hair to be set in crystal, the afflicted Mrs. Norton cut off, before the coffin was closed, four charming ringlets ; one of which the colonel took for a locket ; which, he says, he will cause to be made, and wear next his heart in memory of his beloved cousin.

Between four and five in the morning, the corpse was put into the hearse ; the coffin before being filled, as intended, with flowers and aromatic herbs, and proper care taken to prevent the corpse suffering (to the eye) from the jolting of the hearse.

Poor Mrs. Norton is extremely ill. I gave particular directions to Mrs. Smith's maid (whom I have ordered to attend the good woman in a mourning chariot) to take care of her. The colonel, who rides with his servants within view of the hearse, says, that he will see my orders in relation to her enforced.

When the hearse moved off, and was out of sight, I locked up the lady's chamber, into which all that had belonged to her was removed.

I expect to hear from the colonel as soon as he is got down, by a servant of his own.

Mr. Mowbray to John Belford, Esq.

Uxbridge, Sunday morn. nine o'clock.

DEAR JACK,

I SEND you inclosed a letter from Mr. Lovelace ; which, though written in the cursed algebra, I know to be such a one as will shew what a *queer* way he is in ; for he read it to us with the air of a tragedian. You will see by it what the mad fellow had intended to do, if we had not all of us interposed. He was actually

setting out with a surgeon of this place, to have the lady opened and embalmed.—Rot me, if it be not my full persuasion, that if he had, her heart would have been found to be either iron or marble.

We have got Lord M. to him. His lordship is also much afflicted at the lady's death. His sisters and nieces, he says, will be ready to break their hearts. What a rout's there about a woman! For after all, she was no more.

We have taken a pailful of black bull's blood from him, and this has lowered him a little. But he threatens Colonel Morden, he threatens you for your cursed reflections, and curses all the world and himself, still.

Last night his mourning, (which is full as deep as for a wife) was brought home, and his fellows, mourning too. And, though eight o'clock, he would put it on, and make them attend him in theirs.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

Uxbridge, Sat. Sept. 9.

JACK,

I THINK it absolutely right that my ever dear and beloved lady should be opened and embalmed. It must be done out of hand—this very afternoon. Your acquaintance Tompkins, and old Anderson of this place, whom I will bring with me, shall be the surgeons. I have talked to the latter about it.

I will see every thing done with that decorum which the case, and the sacred person of my beloved require.

Every thing that can be done to preserve the charmer from decay, shall also be done. And when she will descend to her original dust, or cannot be kept longer, I will then have her laid in my family vault, between my own father and mother. Myself, as I am in my *soul*, so in *person*, chief mourner. But her *heart*, to which I have such unquestionable pretensions, in which I had once so large a share, and which I will prize above my own, I *will* have. I will keep it in spirits. Its hall never be out of my sight. And all the charges of *sepulture* too shall be mine.

Surely nobody will dispute my right to her. Whose was she living? whose is she dead, but mine?—Her cursed parents, whose barbarity to her, no doubt, was the *true* cause of her death, have long since renounced her. She left *them* for *me*. She chose *me*, therefore: and I was her husband. What though I treated her like a villain? Do I not pay for it now? Would she not have been mine had I not? Nobody will dispute but she would. And *has* she not forgiven me?—I am then in *statu quo prius* with her

—am I not?—as if I had never offended? Whose then can she be but mine?

I will free you from your executorship, and all your cares.

Take notice, Belford, that I do hereby actually discharge you and every body, from all cares and troubles relating to her. And as to her last testament, I will execute it myself.

There were no articles between us, no settlements; and she is mine, as you see I have proved to a demonstration; nor could she dispose of herself but as I pleased. D—nation seize me then if I make not good my right against all opposers!

I charge you stir not in any part of her will, but by my express direction. I will order every thing myself. For am I not her husband? And being forgiven by her, am I not the chosen of her heart? What else signifies her forgiveness?

Although her will may in some respects cross mine, yet I expect to be observed. I will be the interpreter of hers.

Next to mine, hers shall be observed; for she is my wife; and shall be to all eternity. I will never have another.

Adieu, Jack, I am preparing to be with you. I charge you, as you value my life or your own, do not oppose me in any thing relating to my Clarissa Lovelace.

My temper is entirely altered. I know not what it is to laugh, or smile, or be pleasant. I am grown choleric and impatient, and will not be controlled.

R. LOVELACE.

In a separate paper inclosed in the above

Let me tell thee, in characters still, that I am in a dreadful way just now. My brain is all boiling like a cauldron over a fiery furnace. What a devil is the matter with me, I wonder! I never was so strange in my life.

In truth, Jack, I have been a most execrable villain. And when I consider all my actions to this angel of a woman, and in her the piety, the charity, the wit, the beauty, I have *helped* to destroy, and the good to the world I have thereby been a means of frustrating. I can pronounce d—nation upon myself. How then can I expect mercy any where else!

Colonel Morden to John Belford, Esq.

Sunday night, Sept. 10.

DEAR SIR,

ACCORDING to my promise, I send you an account of matters here. Poor Mrs. Norton was so very ill upon the road, that slowly

as the hearse moved, and the chariot followed, I was afraid we should not have got her to St. Alban's.

When we were within five miles of Harlowe Place, I put on a hand-gallop. I ordered the hearse to proceed more slowly still, the cross-road we were in being rough; and having more time before us than I wanted; for I wished not the hearse to be in till near dusk. I got to Harlowe Place about four o'clock. You may believe I found a mournful house.

At my entrance into the court, they were all in motion. Every servant whom I saw had swelled eyes, and looked with so much concern, that at first I apprehended some new disaster had happened in the family. Mr. John and Mr. Antony Harlowe, and Mrs. Hervey, were there. They all helped on one another's grief, as they had before done each other's hardness of heart.

My cousin James met me at the entrance of the hall. His countenance expressed a fixed concern, and he desired me to excuse his behaviour the last time I was there.

My cousin Arabella came to me (full of tears and grief)

O cousin! said she, hanging upon my arm, I dare not ask you any questions!—About the approach of the hearse, I suppose she meant.

I myself was full of grief; and without going farther or speaking, sat down in the hall in the first chair.

The brother sat down on one hand of me, the sister on the other. Both were silent. The latter in tears.

Mr. Antony Harlowe came to me soon after. His face was overspread with all the appearance of woe. He requested me to walk into the parlour; where, as he said, were all his fellow mourners.

I attended him in. My cousins James and Arabella followed me.

A perfect concert of grief, as I may say, broke out the moment I entered the parlour.

As I was the only person (grieved as I was myself) from whom any of them, at that instant, could derive comfort; Let us not, said I, my dear cousin, approaching the inconsolable mother, give way to a grief, which, however just, can now avail us nothing. We hurt ourselves, and cannot recal the dear creature for whom we mourn. Nor would you wish it, if you knew with what assurances of eternal happiness she left the world—she is happy, madam—Depend upon it, she is happy! And comfort yourselves with that assurance!

O cousin, cousin! cried the unhappy mother, withdrawing her hand from that of her sister Hervey, and pressing mine with it you know not what a child I have lost!—Then, in a lower voice and *how* lost!—That it is that makes the loss insupportable.

They all joined in a kind of melancholy chorus, and each accused him and herself, and some of them one another. But the eyes of all, in turn, were cast upon my cousin James, as the person who had kept up the general resentment against so sweet a creature. While he was hardly able to bear his own remorse: nor Miss Harlowe hers; she breaking out into words, How tauntingly did I write to her. How barbarously did I insult her! Yet how patiently did she take it!—Who would have thought that she had been so near her end!—O brother! brother! but for *you*!—but for *you*!—Double not upon me, said he, my own woes! I have every thing before me that has passed! I thought only to reclaim a dear creature that had erred! I intended not to break her tender heart! But it was the villainous Lovelace who did that—not any of us!

About six o'clock the hearse came to the outward gate—the parish-church is at some distance; but the wind setting fair, the afflicted family were struck, just before it came, into a fresh bit of grief, on hearing the funeral bell tolled in a very solemn manner. A respect, as it proved, and as they all guessed, paid to the memory of the dear deceased, out of officious love, as the hearse passed near the church.

Judge, when their grief was so great in expectation of it, what it must be when it arrived.

A servant came in to acquaint us with what its lumbering heavy noise up the paved inner court-yard apprised us of before. He spoke not. He could not speak. He looked, bowed and withdrew.

I stepped out. No one else could then stir. Her brother, however, soon followed me. When I came to the door, I beheld a sight very affecting.

You have heard, sir, how universally my dear cousin was beloved. By the poor and middling sort especially, no young lady was ever so much beloved. And with reason: she was the common patroness of all the honest poor in her neighbourhood.

A hearse passing through country villages, and from London, however slenderly attended, takes every one's attention. Nor was it hard to guess whose *this* must be, though not adorned by escutcheons, when the cross roads to Harlowe Place were taken, as soon as it came within six miles of it: so that the hearse, and the solemn tolling of the bell, had drawn together at least fifty of the neighbouring men, women, and children, and some of good appearance. Not a soul of them, it seems, with a dry eye, and each lamenting the death of this admired lady, *who*, as I am told, *never stirred out but somebody was the better for her*.

These, when the coffin was taken out of the hearse, crowding about it, hindered for a few moments its being carried in; the young people struggling who should bear it; and yet with respectful *whisperings*, rather than clamorous contention.

At last six maidens were permitted to carry it in by the six handles.

The corpse was thus borne, with the most solemn respect, into the hall, and placed for the present upon two stools there. The plates, and emblems, and inscription, set every one gazing upon it, and admiring it. The more, when they were told that all was of her own ordering. They wished to be permitted a sight of the corpse; but rather mentioned this as their *wish* than as their *hope*. When they had all satisfied their curiosity, and remarked upon the emblems, they dispersed with blessings upon her memory, and with tears and lamentations; pronouncing her to be happy; and inferring, were *she* not so, what would become of them?

The servants of the family then got about the coffin. They could not before: and that afforded a new scene of sorrow: but a silent one; for they spoke only by their eyes, and by sighs, looking upon the lid, and upon one another, by turns, with hands lifted up. The presence of their young master possibly might awe them, and cause their grief to be expressed only in dumb show.

As for Mr. James Harlowe, (who accompanied me but withdrew when he saw the crowd) he stood looking upon the lid, when the people had left it, with a fixed attention: yet, I dare say, knew not a symbol or letter upon it at that moment, had the question been asked him. In a profound reverie he stood, his arms folded, his head on one side, and marks of stupefaction imprinted upon every feature.

But when the corpse was carried into the lesser parlour adjoining to the hall, which she used to call *her* parlour, and put upon a table in the middle of the room, and the father and mother, the two uncles, her aunt Hervey, and her sister, came in, joining her brother and me, with trembling feet, and eager woe, the scene was still more affecting. Their sorrow was heightened, no doubt, by the remembrance of their unforgiving severity: and now seeing before them the receptacle that contained the glory of their family, who so lately was driven thence by their indiscreet violence; never, never more to be restored to them! no wonder that their grief was more than common grief.

They would have withheld the mother, it seems from coming in. but when they could not, though undetermined before, they all bore her company, led on by an impulse they could not resist. The poor lady but just cast her eye upon the coffin, and then snatched it away, retiring with passionate grief towards the window; yet addressing herself, with clasped hands, as if to her beloved daughter; O my child, my child! cried she; thou pride of my hope! Why was I not permitted to speak pardon and peace to thee!—O forgive thy cruel mother!

Her son (his heart then softened, as his eyes shewed) besought her to withdraw: and her woman looking in at that moment, he called her to assist him in conducting her lady into the middle parlour: and then returning, met his father going out at the door, who also had but just cast his eye on the coffin, and yielded to my entreaties to withdraw. His grief was too deep for utterance, till he saw his son coming in; and then, fetching a heavy groan, Never, said he, was sorrow like my sorrow!—O son! son!—in a reproaching accent, his face turned from him.

The uncles and the sister, looked and turned away, very often, upon the emblems, in silent sorrow. Mrs. Hervey would have read to them the inscription—these words she did read, *here the wicked cease from troubling*—but could read no farther. Her tears fell in large drops upon the plate she was contemplating; and yet she was desirous of gratifying a curiosity that mingled impatience with her grief because she could *not* gratify it, although she often wiped her eyes as they flowed.

Monday morn. between eight and nine.

THE unhappy family are preparing for a mournful meeting at breakfast. Mr. James Harlowe, who has had as little rest as I has written to Mr. Melville, who has promised to draw up a brief eulogium on the deceased. Miss Howe is expected here by-and-by to see, for the last time, her beloved friend.

Miss Howe, by her messenger, desires she may not be taken any notice of. She shall not tarry six minutes, was the word. Her desire will be easily granted her.

I am, Sir,

Your faithful humble servant,

WILLIAM MORDEN.

Colonel Morden. In continuation.

Monday afternoon Sept. 11.

SIR,

WE are such bad company here to one another, that it is some relief to retire, and write.

I was summoned to breakfast about half an hour after nine. Slowly did the mournful congress meet. Each lifelessly and spiritless took our places, with swoln eyes, inquiring, without expecting any tolerable account, how each had rested.

The sorrowing mother gave for answer, that she should never more know what rest was.

By the time we were well seated, the bell ringing, the outward

gate opening, a chariot rattling over the pavement of the court yard, put them into emotion.

I left them : and was just time enough to give Miss Howe my hand as she alighted : her maid in tears remaining in the chariot.

(I think you told me, sir, you never saw Miss Howe. She is a fine graceful young lady. A fixed melancholy on her whole aspect, overclouded a vivacity and fire, which, nevertheless, darted now-and-then through the awful gloom. I shall ever respect her for her love to my dear cousin.)

Never did I think, said she, as she gave me her hand, to enter more these doors : but, living or dead, my *Clarissa* brings me after her any-whither.

She entered with me the little parlour ; and seeing the coffin, withdrew her hand from mine, and with impatience pushed aside the lid. As impatiently she removed the face-cloth. In a wild air, she clasped her uplifted hands together : and now looked upon the corpse, now up to heaven, as if appealing to that. Her bosom heaved and fluttered discernible through her handkerchief, and at last she broke silence ;—O sir !—See you not here !—See you not here—the glory of her sex ?—Thus by the most villainous of yours—*thus*—laid low ?

O my blessed friend !—said she—my sweet companion !—my lovely monitress :—kissing her lips at every tender appellation. And is this all !—Is it all, of my CLARISSA'S story !

Then, after a short pause, and a profound sigh, she turned to me, and then to her breathless friend. But *is* she, *can* she be really dead !—O no !—She only sleeps.—Awake, my beloved friend ! My sweet clay-cold friend, awake ! Let thy Anna Howe revive thee ; by her warm breath revive thee, my dear creature ! And, kissing her again, let my warm lips animate thy cold ones !

Then, sighing again, as from the bottom of her heart, and with an air as if disappointed that she answered not, and can such perfection end thus !—And art thou really and indeed flown from thine Anna Howe !—O my unkind CLARISSA !

She was silent a few moments, and then, seeming to recover herself, she turned to me—Forgive, forgive, Mr. Morden, this wild phrensy !—I am not myself !—I never shall be !—You knew not the excellence, no, not *half* the excellence, that is thus laid low !—Repeating, this cannot, surely, be all of my CLARISSA'S story !

Excuse me, sir (turning to me, who was as much moved as herself) ; I loved the dear creature as never woman loved another. Excuse my frantic grief. How has the glory of her sex fallen a victim to villainy, and to hardheartedness !

Madam, said I, they all have it—now indeed they have it—

And let them have it !—I should belie my love for the friend of my heart, were I to pity them !—But how unhappy am I [looking

upon her] that I saw her not before these eyes were shut, before there lips were forever closed !—Oh ! sir, you know not the wisdom that continually flowed from these lips when she spoke !—Nor what a friend I have lost !

Then, surveying the lid, she seemed to take in at once the meaning of the emblems : and this gave her so much fresh grief, that though she several times wiped her eyes, she was unable to read the inscription and texts : turning therefore to me, favour me, sir, I pray you, by a line, with the description of these emblems, and with these texts : and if I might be allowed a lock of the dear creature's hair—

I told her, that her executor would order both ; and would also send her a copy of her last will ; in which she would find the most grateful remembrances of her love for her, who she calls *the sister of her heart*.

Justly, said she, does she call me so : for we had but one heart, but one soul, between us and now my better half is torn from me,—*what shall I do ?*

But looking round her, on a servant's stepping by the door, as if again she had apprehended it was some of the family—Once more, said she, a solemn, an everlasting adieu !—*Alas for me !* a solemn, an everlasting adieu !

Then again embracing her face with both her hands and kissing it, and afterwards the hands of the dear deceased, first one, then the other, she gave me her hand, and quitting the room with precipitation, rushed into her chariot ; and when there, with profound sighs, and a fresh burst of tears, unable to speak, she bowed her head to me, and was driven away.

Colonel Morden. In continuation.

Thursday night, Sept. 14.

We are just returned from the solemnization of the last mournful rite. My cousin James and his sister, Mr. and Mrs. Hervey, and *their* daughter, a young lady whose affection for my departed cousin shall ever bind me to her ; my cousins John and Antony Harlowe, myself and some other more distant relations of the names of Fuller and Allinson (who, to testify their respect to the memory of the dear deceased, had put themselves in mourning) self-invited, attended it.

The father and mother would have joined in these last honours had they been able : but they were both very much indisposed ; and continue to be so.

The inconsolable mother told Mrs. Norton, that the two mothers of the sweetest child in the world ought not, on this

occasion, to be separated. She therefore desired her to stay with *her*.

The whole solemnity was performed with great decency and order. The distance from Harlowe Place to the church is about half a mile. All the way the corpse was attended by great numbers of people of all conditions.

It was nine when it entered the church; every corner of which was crowded. Such a profound, such a silent respect did I never see paid at the funeral of princes. An attentive sadness overspread the face of all.

The eulogy pronounced by Mr. Melville was a very pathetic one. He wiped his own eyes often, and made every body present still oftener wipe theirs.

The auditors were most particularly affected, when he told them, that the solemn text was her own choice.

He enumerated her fine qualities, naming with honour their late worthy pastor for his authority.

Every enumerated excellence was witnessed to in different parts of the church in respectful whispers by different persons, as of their own knowledge, as I have been since informed.

When he pointed to the pew where (doing credit to religion by her example) she used to sit or kneel, the whole auditory, as one person, turned to the pew with the most respectful solemnity, as if she had been herself there.

When the gentleman attributed condescension and mingled dignity to her, a buzzing approbation was given to the attribute throughout the church; and a poor neat woman under my pew added, "That she was indeed all graciousness, and would speak to any body."

Many eyes ran over, when he mentioned her charities, her well-judged charities. And her reward was decreed from every mouth with sighs and sobs from some, and these words from others, "The poor will dearly miss her."

What he most insisted upon was, the happy end she made and thence drew consolation to her relations, and instruction to the auditory.

In a word, his performance was such as heightened the reputation which he had before in a very eminent degree obtained.

When the corpse was to be carried down into the vault (a very spacious one, within the church) there was great crowding to see the coffin lid, and the devices upon it. Particularly two gentlemen, muffled up in cloaks, pressed forward. These, it seems, were Mr. Mullins and Mr. Wyerley; both of them professed admirers of my dear cousin.

When they came near the coffin, and cast their eyes upon the lid, "In that little space," said Mr. Mullins, "is included all

human excellence!"—And then Mr. Wyerley, unable to contain himself, was forced to quit the church; and we hear is very ill.

It is said that Mr. Solmes was in a remote part of the church, wrapped round in a horseman's coat: and that he shed tears several times. But I saw him not.

Another gentleman was there incognito, in a pew near the entrance of the vault, who had not been taken notice of, but for his great emotion when he looked over his pew, at the time the coffin was carried down to its last place. This was Miss Howe's worthy Mr. Hickman.

My cousins John and Antony, and their nephew James, chose not to descend into the vault among their departed ancestors.

Miss Harlowe was extremely affected. Her *conscience*, as well as her love, was concerned on the occasion. She would go down with the corpse of her dear, her only sister, she said: but her brother would not permit it. And her overwhelmed eye pursued the coffin till she could see no more of it: and then she threw herself on the seat, and was near fainting away.

I accompanied it down, that I might not only satisfy myself, but you, sir, her executor, that it was deposited, as she had directed, at the feet of her grandfather.

Mr. Melville came down, contemplated the lid, and shed a few tears over it. I was so well satisfied with his discourse and behaviour, that I presented him on the solemn spot with a ring of some value; and thanked him for his performance.

And here I left the remains of my beloved cousin; having bespoken my own place by the side of her coffin.

Your most faithful servant,

WM. MORDEN.

P. S. You will have a letter from my cousin James, who hopes to prevail upon you to relinquish the executorship. It has not my encouragement.

Mr. James Harlowe to John Belford, Esq

Harlowe Place, Friday night, Sept. 15.

SIR,

I HOPE, from the character my worthy cousin Morden gives you, that you will excuse the application I make to you, to oblige a whole family in an affair that much concerns their peace, and cannot equally concern any body else. You will immediately judge, sir, that this is the executorship of which my sister has given you the trouble by her last will.

We shall all think ourselves extremely obliged to you, if you please to relinquish this trust to our own family; the reasons which follow pleading for our expectation of this favour from you.

First, because she never would have had the thought of troubling you, sir, if she had believed any of her near relations would have taken it upon themselves.

Secondly, I understand, that she recommends to you in the will, to trust to the honour of any of our family, for the performance of such of the articles as are of a domestic nature. We are *any* of us, and *all* of us, if you request it, willing to stake our honours upon this occasion: and all you can desire, as a man of honour, is, that the trust be executed.

We are the more concerned, sir, to wish you to decline this office, because of your short and accidental knowledge of the dear testatrix, and long and intimate acquaintance with the man to whom *she* owed her ruin, and *we* the greatest loss and disappointment (her manifold excellencies considered) that ever befel a family.

You will allow due weight, I dare say, to this plea, if you make our case your own: and so much the readier, when I assure you, that your interfering in this matter so much against our inclinations (excuse, sir, my plain dealing) will very probably occasion an opposition in some points, where otherwise there might be none.

What therefore I propose is, not that my father should assume this trust: he is too much afflicted to undertake it—nor yet myself—I might be thought too much concerned in interest: but that it may be allowed to devolve upon my two uncles; whose known honour, and whose affection to the dear deceased, nobody ever doubted: and they will treat with you, sir, through my cousin Morden, as to the points they will undertake to perform.

The trouble you have already had, will well entitle you to the legacy she bequeaths you, together with the reimbursement of all the charges you have been at, and allowance of the legacies you have discharged, although you should not have qualified yourself to act as an executor; as I presume you have not *yet* done, nor will *now* do.

Your compliance, sir, will oblige a family (who have already distress enough upon them) in the circumstance that occasions this application to you; and more particularly, sir,

Your most humble servant,

JAMES HARLOWE, Jun.

I send this by one of my servants, who will attend your dispatch

Mr. Belford to James Harlowe, Jun. Esq.

SIR,

Saturday, Sept. 16.

YOU will excuse my plain dealing in turn : for I must observe, that if I had *not* the just opinion I have of the sacred nature of the office I have undertaken, some passages in the letter you have favoured me with, would convince me that I ought not to excuse myself from acting in it.

I need name only one of them. You are pleased to say, that your uncles, if the trust be relinquished to them, will *treat with me* through Colonel Morden, *as to the points they will undertake to perform.*

Permit me, sir, to say, that it is the *duty* of an executor so see *every point* performed, that *can* be performed. Nor will I leave the performance of mine to any other persons, especially where a qualifying is so directly intimated, and where all the branches of your family have shewn themselves, with respect to the incomparable lady, to have but one mind.

I am sorry for the hints you give of an *opposition*, where, as you say, there might be none, if I did not interfere. I see not, sir, why your animosity against a man who cannot be defended, should be carried to such a height against one who never gave you offence ; and this only, because he is acquainted with that man I will not say all I might say on this occasion.

As to the legacy to myself, I assure you, sir, that neither my circumstances, nor my temper, will put me upon being a gainer by the executorship. I shall take pleasure to tread in the steps of the admirable testatrix in all I may ; and rather will increase than diminish her poor's fund.

With regard to the trouble that may attend the execution of the trust, I shall not, in honour to her memory, value ten times more than this can give me. I have indeed two other executorships on my hands ; but they sit light upon me. And *survivors cannot better or more charitably bestow their time.*

I conceive that every article, but that relating to the poor's fund (such is the excellence of the disposition of the most excellent of women) may be performed in two months' time, at farthest.

Occasions of litigation or offence shall not proceed from me. You need only apply to Col. Morden, who shall command me in every thing that the will allows me to oblige your family in. I do assure you, that I am as unwilling to obtrude myself upon it, as any of it can wish.

Permit me to add, that when you have perused the will, and coolly considered every thing, it is my hope, that you will yourself be of opinion, that there can be no room for dispute or opposition

and that if your family will join to expedite the execution, it will be the most natural and easy way of shutting up the whole affair, and to have done with a man, so causelessly, as to his *own* particular, the object of your dislike, as is, sir,

Your very humble servant, (notwithstanding)

JOHN BELFORD.

THE WILL.*

I CLARISSA HARLOWE, now, by strange melancholy accidents, lodging in the parish of St. Paul, Covent-Garden, being of sound and perfect mind and memory, as I hope these presents, drawn up by myself, and written with my own hand, will testify; do [this second day of September] in the year of our Lord — † make and publish this my last will and testament in manner and form following :

In the first place, I desire that my body may lie unburied three days after my decease, or till the pleasure of my father be known concerning it. But the occasion of my death not admitting of doubt, I will not, on any account, that it be opened ; and it is my desire that it shall not be touched but by those of my own sex.

I have always earnestly requested, that my body might be deposited in the family vault with those of my ancestors. If it might be granted, I could now wish, that it might be placed at the feet of my dear and honoured grandfather. But as I have, by one very unhappy step, been thought to disgrace my whole lineage, and therefore this last honour may be refused to my corpse ; in this case, my desire is, that it may be interred in the church-yard belonging to the parish in which I shall die ; and that in the most private manner, between the hours of eleven and twelve at night ; attended only by Mrs. Lovick, and Mr. and Mrs. Smith, and their maid-servant.

I have already given verbal directions, that after I am dead (and laid out in the manner I have ordered) I may be put into my coffin as soon as possible : it is my desire, that I may not be unnecessarily exposed to the view of any body : except any of my relations should vouchsafe, for the last time, to look upon me.

And I could wish, if it might be avoided without making ill-will between Mr. Lovelace and my executor, that the former might not be permitted to see my corpse. But if, as he is a man very uncontrollable, and as I am nobody's, he insist upon viewing *her dead*, whom he ONCE before saw in a manner dead, let

* Abridged.

† A blank, at the writing, was left for this date, and filled up on this day.

‡ The date of the year is left blank for particular reasons.

his gay curiosity be gratified. Let him behold, and triumph over the wretched remains of one who has been made a victim to his barbarous perfidy: but let some good person, as by my desire, give him a paper, whilst he is viewing the ghastly spectacle, containing these few words only—"Gay, cruel heart! behold here the remains of the once ruined, yet now happy, Clarissa Harlowe!—See what thou thyself must quickly be;—and REPENT!"

Yet, to shew that I die in perfect charity with *all the world*, I do most sincerely forgive Mr. Lovelace the wrongs he has done me.

If my father can pardon the errors of his unworthy child, so far as to suffer her corpse to be deposited at the feet of her grandfather, as above requested, I could wish (my misfortunes being so notorious) that a short discourse might be pronounced over my remains, before they be interred. The subject of the discourse I shall determine before I conclude this writing.

And *now*, with regard to the worldly matters which I shall die possessed of, as well as to those which of right appertain to me, either by the will of my said grandfather, or otherwise; thus do I dispose of them.

In the first place, I give and bequeath all the real estates in or to which I have any claim or title by the said will, to my ever-honoured father James Harlowe, Esq. and that rather than to my brother and sister, to whom I had once thoughts of devising them, because, if they survive my father, those estates will assuredly vest in them, or one of them, by virtue of his favour and indulgence, as the circumstances of things, with regard to marriage settlements, or otherwise, may require; or, as they may respectively merit by the continuance of their duty.

The house late my grandfather's, called *the Grove*, and by him, in honour of me, and of some of my voluntary employments, *my Dairy-house*, and the furniture thereof as it now stands (the pictures and large iron chest of old plate excepted) I also bequeath to my said father; only begging it as a favour that he will be pleased to permit my dear Mrs. Norton to pass the remainder of her days in that house; and to have and enjoy the apartments in it, known by the name of *the housekeeper's apartments*, with the furniture in them; and which was bought for me by my grandfather, who delighted to call me his housekeeper; and which therefore in his lifetime I used as such: the office to go with the apartments.

But with regard to what has accrued from that estate, since my grandfather's death, and to the sum of nine hundred and seventy pounds, which proved to be the moiety of the money that my said grandfather had by him at his death, and which moiety he bequeathed to me for my sole and separate use—and which sum I gave into my father's hands, together with the management

and produce of the whole estate devised to me—these sums, however considerable when put together, I hope I may be allowed to dispose of absolutely, as my love and my gratitude (not confined wholly to my own family, which is very wealthy in all its branches) may warrant; and which therefore I shall dispose of in the manner hereafter mentioned.

My father, of his love and bounty, was pleased to allow me the same quarterly sums that he allowed my sister, for apparel and other requisites; and (pleased with me then) used to say, that those sums should not be deducted from the estate and effects bequeathed to me by my grandfather: but having *mortally* offended him (as I fear it may be said) by one unhappy step, it may be expected that he will reimburse himself those sums—it is therefore my will and direction, that he shall be allowed to pay and satisfy himself for all such quarterly or other sums, which he was so good as to advance me from the time of my grandfather's death; and that his account of such sums shall likewise be taken without questioning: the money, however, which I left behind me in my *escritoire*, being to be taken in part of those disbursements.

My grandfather, who, in his goodness and favour to me, knew no bounds, was pleased to bequeath to me all the family pictures at his late house, some of which are very masterly performances; with command, that if I died unmarried, or if married and had no descendants, they should then go to that son of his (if more than one should be then living) whom I should think would set most value by them. Now, as I know that my honoured uncle, John Harlowe, Esq. was pleased to express some concern that they were not left to him, as eldest son; and as he has a gallery where they may be placed to advantage; and as I have reason to believe, that he will bequeath them to my father, if he survive him; who, no doubt, will leave them to my brother; I therefore bequeath all the said family pictures to my said uncle John Harlowe. In these pictures, however, I conclude not one of my own, drawn when I was about fourteen years of age; which I shall hereafter in another article bequeath.

My said honoured grandfather having a great fondness for the old family plate, which he would never permit to be changed, having lived, as he used to say, to see a great deal of it come into request again in the revolution of fashions; and having left the same to me, with a command to keep it entire; this family plate, which is deposited in a large iron chest, in the strong room at his late dwelling-house, I bequeath entire to my honoured uncle Antony Harlowe, Esq.; with the same injunctions which were laid on me; not doubting but he will confirm and strengthen them by his own last will.

I bequeath to my ever valued friend, Mrs. Judith Norton, to

whose piety and care, seconding the piety and care of my ever honoured and excellent mother, I owe, morally speaking, the qualifications, which, for eighteen years of my life, made me beloved and respected, the full sum of six hundred pounds, to be paid her within three months after my death.

I bequeath also to the same good woman thirty guineas, for mourning for her and for her son, my foster-brother.

To Mrs. Dorothy Hervey, the only sister of my honoured mother, I bequeath the sum of fifty guineas for a ring.

To my kind and much-valued cousin Miss Dolly Hervey, daughter of my aunt Hervey, I bequeath my watch and equipage, and my best Mechlin and Brussels head dresses and ruffles ; also my gown and petticoat of flowered silver of my own work ; which having been made up but a few days before I was confined to my chamber, I never wore.

To the same young lady I bequeath likewise my harpsichord, my chamber-organ, and all my music-books.

As my sister has a very pretty library ; and as my beloved Miss Howe has also her late father's as well as her own ; I bequeath all my books in general, with the cases they are in, to my said cousin Dolly Hervey.

I also bequeath to the same young lady twenty-five guineas for a ring, to be worn in remembrance of her true friend.

If I live not to see my worthy cousin William Morden, Esq. I desire my humble and grateful thanks may be given to him for his favour and goodness to me : and particularly for his endeavours to reconcile my other friends to me, at a time when I was doubtful whether he would forgive me himself. As he is in great circumstances, I will only beg of him to accept of two or three trifles, in remembrance of a kinswoman who always honoured *him* as much as he loved *her*. Particularly, of that piece of flowers, which my uncle Robert, his father, was very earnest to obtain in order to carry it abroad with him.

I desire him likewise to accept of the little miniature picture set in gold, which his worthy father made me sit for to the famous Italian master whom he brought over with him ; and which he presented to me, that I might bestow it, as he was pleased to say, upon the man whom I should be one day most inclined to favour.

To the same gentleman I also bequeath my rose diamond ring, which was a present from his good father to me ; and will be the more valuable to him on that account.

I humbly request Mrs. Annabella Howe, the mother of my dear Miss Howe, to accept of my respectful thanks for all her favours and goodness to me, when I was so frequently a visitor to her beloved daughter ; and of a ring of twenty-five guineas price,

My picture at full length, which is in my late grandfather's closet (excepted in an article above from the family pictures) drawn when I was near fourteen years of age ; about which time my dear Miss Howe and I began to know, to distinguish, and to love one another so dearly—I cannot express how dearly—I bequeath to that sister of my heart : of whose friendship, as well in adversity as prosperity, when I was deprived of all other comfort and comforters, I have had such instances, as that our love can only be exceeded in that state of perfection, in which I hope to rejoice with her hereafter, to all eternity.

I bequeath also to the same dear friend my best diamond ring, which, with other jewels, is in the private drawer of my escritoire : as also all my finished and framed pieces of needle-work, the flower-piece excepted, which I have already bequeathed to my cousin Morden.

My whole length picture in the Vandyke taste, that used to hang in my own parlour, as I was permitted to call it, I bequeath to my aunt Hervey, except my mother should think fit to keep it herself.

I bequeath to the worthy Charles Hickman, Esq. the locket, with the miniature picture of the lady he best loves, which I have constantly worn, and shall continue to wear near my heart till the approach of my last hour.

I make it my earnest request to my dear Miss Howe, that she will not put herself into mourning for me. But I desire her acceptance of a ring with my hair ; and that Mr. Hickman will also accept of the like ; each of the value of twenty-five guineas.

I bequeath to Lady Betty Lawrence, and to her sister Lady Sarah Sadleir, and to the right honourable the Earl of M. and to their worthy nieces Miss Charlotte and Miss Martha Montague, each an enameled ring, with a cypher Cl. H. with my hair in crystal, and round the inside of each, the day, month, and year of my death : each ring with brilliants, to cost twenty guineas. And this as a small token of the grateful sense I have of the honour of their good opinions and kind wishes in my favour ; and of their truly noble offer to me of a very considerable annual provision, when they apprehended me to be entirely destitute of any.

To the reverend and learned Dr. Arthur Lewen, by whose instructions I have been equally delighted and benefited, I bequeath twenty guineas for a ring. If it should please God to call him to himself, before he can receive this small bequest, it is my will, that his worthy daughter may have the benefit of it.

In token of the grateful sense I have of the civilities paid me by Mrs. and Miss Howe's domestics, from time to time, in my visits there, I bequeath thirty guineas, to be divided among them, as their dear young mistress shall think proper.

To each of my worthy companions and friends, Miss Biddy Lloyd, Miss Fanny Alston, Miss Rachel Biddulph, and Miss Cartwright Campbell, I bequeath five guineas for a ring.

To my late maid-servant Hannah Burton, an honest, faithful creature, who loved *me*, revered my *mother*, and respected my *sister*, and never sought to do any thing unbecoming of her character, I bequeath the sum of fifty pounds, to be paid within one month after my decease, she labouring under ill health : and if that ill health continue, I commend her for further assistance to my good Mrs. Norton to be put upon my poor's fund, hereafter to be mentioned.

To the coachman, groom, and two footmen, and five maids at Harlowe Place, I bequeath ten pounds each ; to the helper, five pounds.

To my sister's maid Betty Barnes, I bequeath ten pounds, to shew that I resent not former disobligations ; which I believe were owing more to the insolence of office, and to natural pertness, than to personal ill-will.

All my wearing apparel, of whatever sort, that I have not been obliged to part with, or which is not already bequeathed, (my linen excepted) I desire Mrs. Norton will accept of.

To the worthy Mrs. Lovick, from whom I have received great civilities, and even maternal kindnesses ; and to Mrs. Smith, (with whom I lodge) from whom *also* I have received great kindnesses ; I bequeath all my linen, and all my unsold laces ; to be divided equally between them, as they shall agree : or, in case of disagreement, the same to be sold, and the money arising to be equally shared by them.

And I bequeath to the same two good women, as a further token of my thankful acknowledgments of their kind love and compassionate concern for me, the sum of twenty guineas each.

The few books I have at my present lodgings, I desire Mrs. Lovick to accept of : and that she be permitted, if she please, to take a copy of my book of *Meditations*, as I used to call it ; being extracts from the best of books ; which she seemed to approve of, although suited particularly to my own case. As for the book itself, perhaps my good Mrs. Norton will be glad to have it, as it is written with my own hand.

I do hereby make, constitute, and ordain, John Belford, of Edgeware, in the county of Middlesex, Esq., the sole executor of this my last will and testament ; having previously obtained his leave so to do. I have given the reasons which induced me to ask this gentleman to take upon him this trouble, to Miss Howe. I therefore refer to her on this subject.

But I do most earnestly beg of him the said Mr. Belford, that, in the execution of this trust, he will (as he has repeatedly pro-

mised) studiously endeavour to promote peace with, and suppress resentments, in every one; so as that all further mischiefs may be prevented, as well *from*, as *to* his friend. And in order to this, I beseech him to cultivate the friendship of my worthy cousin Morden; who, as I presume to hope, (when he understands it to be my dying request) will give him his advice and assistance in every article where it may be necessary: and who will perhaps be so good as to interpose with my relations, if any difficulty should arise about carrying any of the articles of this my last will into execution, and to soften them into the wished-for condescension:—for it is my earnest request to Mr. Belford, that he will not seek by law, or by any sort of violence, either by word or deed, to extort the performance from *them*.

Having been pressed by Miss Howe and her mother, to collect the particulars of my sad story, and giving expectation that I would, in order to do my character justice with all my friends and companions; but not having time before me for the painful task, it has been a pleasure to me to find, by extracts kindly communicated to me by my said executor, that I may safely trust my fame to the justice done me by Mr. Lovelace, in his letters to him my said executor. And as Mr. Belford has engaged to contribute what is in his power towards a compilement to be made of all that relate to my story, and knows my whole mind in this respect, it is my desire that he will cause two copies to be made of this collection; one to remain with Miss Howe, the other with himself; and that he will shew or lend his copy, if required, to my aunt Hervey, for the satisfaction of any of my family; but under such restrictions as the said Mr. Belford shall think fit to impose; that neither any other person's safety may be endangered, nor his own honour suffer by the communication.

I bequeath to my said executor the sum of one hundred guineas, as a grateful though insufficient acknowledgment of the trouble he will be at in the execution of the trust he has so kindly undertaken. I desire him likewise to accept of twenty guineas for a ring: and that he will reimburse himself for all the charges and expenses which he shall be at in the execution of this trust.

In the worthy Dr. H. I have found a physician, a father, and a friend. I beg of him, as a testimony of my gratitude, to accept of twenty guineas for a ring.

I have the same obligations to the kind and skilful Mr. Goddard, who attend me as my apothecary. I desire fifteen guineas for a ring may be presented to him.

There are a set of honest indigent people, whom I used to call *my poor*, and to whom Mrs. Norton conveys relief each month (or at shorter periods) in proportion to their necessities, from a sum I deposited in her hands, and from time to time recruited,

as means accrued to me ; but now nearly if not wholly expended *now*, that my fault may be as little aggravated as possible, by the sufferings of the worthy people whom Heaven gave me a heart to relieve ; and as the produce of my grandfather's estate (including the moiety of the sums he had by him, and was pleased to give me at his death, as above-mentioned) together with what I shall further appropriate to the same use in the subsequent articles, will, as I hope, more than answer all my legacies and bequests ; it is my will and desire, that the remainder, be it little or much, shall become a fund to be appropriated, and I hereby direct that it be appropriated, to the like purposes with the sums which I put into Mrs. Norton's hands as aforesaid—and this under the direction and management of the said Mrs. Norton, who knows my whole mind in this particular. And in case of her death, or of her desire to be acquitted of the management thereof, it is my earnest request to my dear Miss Howe, that she will take it upon herself, and that at her own death she will transfer what shall remain undisposed of at the *time*, to such persons, and with such limitations, restrictions, and provisoes, as she shall think will best answer my intention.

It is my will and desire, that the set of jewels which was my grandmother's and presented to me, soon after her death, by my grandfather, be valued ; and the worth of them paid to my executor, if any of my family choose to have them : or otherwise that they be sold, and go to the augmentation of my poor's fund.—But if they may be deemed an equivalent for the sums my father was pleased to advance to me since the death of my grandfather, I desire that they may be given up to him.

I presume, that the diamond necklace, solitaire, ear-rings, and buckles, which were properly my own, presented by my mother's uncle Sir Josias Brookland, will not be purchased by any one of my family, for a too obvious reason ; in this case I desire, that they may be sent to my executor, and that he will dispose of them to the best advantage ; and apply the money to the uses of my will.

In the beginning of this tedious writing, I referred to the latter part of it, the naming of the subject of the discourse which I wished might be delivered at my funeral, if permitted to be interred with my ancestors. I think the following will be suitable to my case. I hope the alteration of the words *her* and *she* for *him* and *he* may be allowable.

"Let not *her* that is deceived trust in vanity ; for vanity shall be *her* recompense. *She* shall be accomplished before *her* time ; and *her* branch shall not be green. *She* shall shake *her* unripe grape as the vine, and shall cast off *her* flower as the olive." *

* Job xv. 31, 32, 33.

But if I am to be interred in town, let only the usual burial service be read over my corpse.

If my body be permitted to be carried down, I bequeath ten pounds to be given to the poor of the parish, at the discretion of the churchwardens, within a fortnight after my interment.

And now, O my blessed REDEEMER, do I, with a lively faith, humbly lay hold of thy meritorious death and sufferings; hoping to be washed clean in thy precious blood from all my sins: in the bare hope of the happy consequences of which, how light do those sufferings seem (grievous as they were at the time) which I confidently trust, will be a means, by thy grace, to work out for me a more exceeding and eternal weight of glory!

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Signed, sealed, published, and declared, the day and year above-written, by the said Clarissa Harlowe, as her last will and testament; contained in seven sheets of paper, all written with her own hand, and every sheet signed and sealed by herself, in the presence of us,

JOHN WILLIAMS,
ARTHUR BEDALL,
ELIZABETH SWANTON.

Colonel Morden to John Belford, Esq.

Sat. Sept. 16.

I HAVE been employed in a most melancholy task, in reading the will of the dear deceased.

The unhappy mother and Mrs. Norton chose to be absent on the affecting occasion. But Mrs. Harlowe made it her earnest request, that every article of it should be fulfilled.

They were all extremely touched with the preamble.

The first words of the will—"I, Clarissa Harlowe, now by strange melancholy accidents, lodging," &c. drew tears from some, sighs from all.

I was obliged to stop at the words, "that she was *nobody's*."

But when I came to the address to be made to the accursed man, "if he were not to be diverted from seeing *her* dead, whom once before he had seen in a manner dead"—execration, and either vows or wishes of revenge, filled every mouth.

These were still more fervently renewed, when they came to hear read her forgiveness of even this man.

You remember, sir, on our first reading of the will in town, the observations I made on the foul play which it is evident the excel-

lent creature met with from this abandoned man, and what I said upon the occasion. I am not used to repeat things of that nature.

When the article was read which bequeathed to the father the grandfather's estate, and the reason assigned for it, (so generous and so dutiful) the father could sit no longer; but withdrew, wiping his eyes, and lifting up his spread hands at Mr. James Harlowe; who rose to attend him to the door, as Arabella likewise did—all he could say—O son!—son!—O girl!—girl!—as if he reproached them for the parts they had acted, and put him upon acting.

But yet, on some occasions, this brother and sister shewed themselves to be true will-disputants.

The clothes, the thirty guineas for mourning to Mrs. Norton, with the recommendation of the good woman for housekeeper at *the Grove*, were thought sufficient, had the article of 600*l.* which was called monstrous, been omitted. Some other passages in the will were called *flights, and such whimsies as distinguish people of imagination from those of judgment.*

My cousin Dolly Hervey was grudged the library. Miss Harlowe said, that as she and her sister never bought the same books, she would take that to herself, and would *make it up* to her cousin Dolly *one way or other.*

I intend, Mr. Belford, to save you the trouble of interposing—the library *shall* be my cousin Dolly's.

The 600*l.* bequeathed to Mrs. Norton, the library to Miss Hervey, and the remembrances to Miss Howe, were not the only articles grudged. Yet to what purpose did they regret the pecuniary bequests, when the poor's fund, and not themselves, would have had the benefit, had not those legacies been bequeathed?

But enough passed to convince me, that my cousin was absolutely right in her choice of an executor out of the family.

You will better conceive, Mr. Belford, than I can express, how much they were touched at the hint, that the dear creature had been obliged to part with some of her clothes.

Silent reproach seized every one of them, when I came to the passage where she mentions, that she deferred filling up some blanks, in hopes of receiving their last blessing and forgiveness.

I will only add, that they could not bear to hear read the concluding part, so solemnly addressed to her Redeemer. They all arose from their seats, and crowded out of the apartment we were in: and then, as I afterwards found, separated, in order to seek that consolation in solitary retirement, which, though they could not hope for from their own reflections, yet, at the time, they had less reason to expect in each other's company. I am, sir,

Your faithful and obedient servant,

WM. MORDEN.

Mr. Belford to the Right Honourable the Earl of M.

MY LORD,

London, Sept. 14.

I AM very apprehensive, that the affair between Mr. Lovelace and the late excellent Miss Clarissa Harlowe will be attended with further bad consequences, notwithstanding her dying injunctions to the contrary. I would therefore humbly propose, that your lordship, and his other relations, will forward the purpose your nephew lately had to go abroad; where I hope he will stay till all is blown over. But as he will not stir, if he know the true motives of your wishes, the avowed inducement, as I hinted once to Mr. Mowbray, may be such as respects his own health both of person and mind. To Mr. Mowbray and Mr. Tourville all countries are alike; and they perhaps will accompany him.

I am glad to hear that he is in a way of recovery: but this the rather induces me to press the matter. And I think no time should be lost.

Your lordship has heard, that I have the honour to be the executor of this admirable lady's last will. I transcribe from it the following paragraph.

He then transcribes the article which so gratefully mentions this nobleman and the ladies of his family, in relation to the rings she bequeathes them, about which he desires their commands.

Miss Montague to John Belford, Esq.

SIR,

M. Hall, Friday, Sept. 15.

MY lord having the gout in his right hand, his lordship, and Lady Sarah, and Lady Betty, have commanded me to inform you, that before your letter came, Mr. Lovelace was preparing for a foreign tour. We shall endeavour to hasten him away on the motives you suggest.

We are all extremely affected with the dear lady's death. Lady Betty and Lady Sarah have been indisposed ever since they heard of it. They had pleased themselves, as had my sister and self, with the hopes of cultivating her acquaintance and friendship after he was gone abroad, upon her own terms. Her kind remembrance of each of us has renewed, though it could not heighten, our regrets for so irreparable a loss. We shall order Mr. Finch, our goldsmith, to wait on you. He has our directions about the rings. They will be long, long worn in memory of the dear testatrix.

Every body is assured, that you will do all in your power to

prevent *farther* ill consequences from this melancholy affair
My lord desires his compliments to you.

I am, sir, your very humble servant,

CH. MONTAGUE.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

M. Hall, Thursday, Sept. 14.

EVER since the fatal seventh of this month, I have been lost to myself and to all the joys of life. I might have gone farther back than that fatal seventh, which, for the future, I will never see anniversarily revolve but in sables; only till that cursed day I had some gleams of hope now-and-then darting in upon me.

They tell me of an odd letter I wrote to you. I remember I did write. But very little of the contents of what I wrote do I remember.

I have been in a cursed way. Methinks something has been working strangely retributive.

To give but one instance of the *retributive*—here I, who was the barbarous cause of the loss of senses for a week together to the most inimitable of women, have been punished with the loss of my own—preparative to—who knows to what?—When, O when shall I know a joyful hour?

I am kept excessively low; and excessively low I *am*. This sweet creature's posthumous letter sticks close to me. All her excellencies rise up hourly to my remembrance.

Yet dare I not indulge in these melancholy reflections. I find my head strangely working again—pen, begone!

Friday Sept. 15.

I RESUME, in a sprightly vein, I hope—Mowbray and Tourville have just now—

But what of Mowbray and Tourville!—What's the world?—What's any body in it?—

Yet they are highly exasperated against thee, for the last letter thou wrotest to them—such an unfriendly, such a merciless—

But it won't do! I must again lay down my pen.—O Belford!—Belford!—I am still, I am still most miserably absent from myself! shall never, never more be what I was!

* * * *

SATURDAY, Sunday, nothing done. Incapable of anything.

Monday, Sept. 18.

HEAVY, d—nably heavy and sick at soul, by Jupiter! I must

come into their expedient. I must see what change of climate will do.

You tell these fellows, and you tell me, of repenting and reforming: but I can do neither. He who *can*, must not have the *extinction* of a Clarissa Harlowe to answer for.—Harlowe!—Curse upon the name!—And curse upon myself for not changing it, as I might have done!—Yet have I no need of urging a curse upon myself—I have it effectually.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

I AM preparing to leave this kingdom. Mowbray and Tourville promise to give me their company in a month or two.

I'll give thee my route.

I shall first to Paris; and, for amusement and diversion sake, try to renew some of my old friendships: thence to some of the German courts: thence perhaps to Vienna: thence descend through Bavaria and the Tyrol to Venice, where I shall keep the carnival: thence to Florence and Turin: thence again over mount Cenis to France: and, when I return again to Paris, shall expect to see my friend Belford, who by that time, I doubt not, will be all crusted and bearded over with penitence, self-denial, and mortification; a very anchoret, only an itinerant one, journeying over in hope to cover a multitude of his own sins, by proselyting his old companions.

But let me tell thee, Jack, if stock rises on, as it has done since I wrote my last letter, I am afraid thou wilt find a difficult task in succeeding, should such be thy purpose.

Thou hast made good resolutions. If thou keepest them not, thou wilt never be able to keep any. But nevertheless, the devil and thy time of life are against thee. And six to one thou failest. Were it only that thou hast *resolved*, six to one thou failest. And if thou dost, thou wilt become the scoff of men, and the triumph of devils.—Then how will I laugh at thee! For this warning is not from principle. Perhaps I wish it were: *but I never lied to man, and hardly ever said truth to woman.* The first is *what all free-livers cannot say*: the second *what every one can*.

I am mad again, by Jupiter!—But, thank my stars, not gloomily so!—Farewell, farewell, farewell, for the third or fourth time, concludes thy

LOVELACE.

I believe Charlotte and you are in private league together. Letters, I find, have passed between her and you, and Lord M

I have been kept strangely in the dark of late ; but will soon break upon you all as the sun upon a midnight thief.

Mr. Belford to Robert Lovelace, Esq.

I SHOULD be glad to know when you intend to set out. I have too much concern for your welfare, not to wish you in a thinner air, and more certain climate.

What have Tourville and Mowbray to do, that they cannot set out with you ? They will not covet my company, I dare say : and I shall not be able to endure theirs, when you are gone : take them therefore with you.

I will not, however forswear making you a visit at Paris, at your return from Germany and Italy : but hardly with the hope of reclaiming you, if due reflection on what I have set before you, and upon what you have written in your two last, will not by that time have done it.

I suppose I shall see you before you go. Once more I wish you were gone. This heavy island-air cannot do for you what that of the continent will.

I do not think I ought to communicate with you, as I used to do, on this side the channel : let me, then, hear from you on the opposite shore, and you shall command the pen, as you please ; and, honestly, the power, of

J. BELFORD.

Mr. Belford to Colonel Morden.

Thursday, Sept. 21.

GIVE me leave, dear sir, to address myself to you in a very serious and solemn manner, on a subject that I must not, cannot dispense with ; as I promised the divine lady, that I would do every thing in my power to prevent that further mischief of which she was so very apprehensive.

I will not content myself with distant hints. It is with very great concern that I have just now heard of a declaration which you are said to have made to your relations at Harlowe Place, that you will not rest till you have avenged your cousin's wrongs upon Mr. Lovelace.

Far be it from me to offer to defend the unhappy man, or even *unduly* to extenuate his crime ! But yet I must say, that the family, by their persecutions of the dear lady at first, and by their implacableness afterwards, ought, at *least*, to *share* the blame with him. There is even great reason to believe, that a lady of

such a religious turn, her virtue neither to be surprised nor corrupted, her will inviolate, would have got over a *mere personal* injury; especially as he would have done all that was in his power to repair it; and as from the application of all his family in his favour, and other circumstances attending his sincere and voluntary offer, the lady might have condescended, with greater glory to herself, than if he had never offended.

When I have the pleasure of seeing you next, I will acquaint you, sir, with all the circumstances of this melancholy story; from which you will see, that Mr. Lovelace was extremely ill treated at first by the whole family, this admirable lady excepted. This exception, I know, heightens his crime: but as his principal intention was but to try her virtue; and that he became so earnest a suppliant to her for marriage; and as he has suffered so deplorably in the loss of his reason, for not having it in his power to repair her wrongs; I presume to hope, that much is to be pleaded against such a resolution as you are said to have made.

I have just now read over the copies of the dear lady's posthumous letters. I send them all to you, except that directed for Mr. Lovelace, which I reserve till I have the pleasure of seeing you. Let me entreat you to read once more *that* written to yourself, and *that* to her brother; which latter I now send you; as they are in point to the present subject.

I think, sir, they are unanswerable. Such, at least, is the effect they have upon me, that I hope I shall never be provoked to draw my sword again in a private quarrel.

Let me *also* (though I presume to hope there is no need, when you coolly consider every thing) remind you of your own promise to your departing cousin; relying upon which, her last moments were the easier.

Excuse me, sir, for the sake of my executorial duty and promise, keeping in eye the dear lady's *personal injunctions*, as well as *written will*, enforced by *letters posthumous*. Every article of which (solicitous as we *both* are to see it duly performed) she would have dispensed with, rather than farther mischief should happen on her account. I am, dear sir,

Your affectionate and faithful servant,

J. BELFORD.

Colonel Morden to John Belford, Esq.

DEAR SIR,

Saturday, Sept. 23.

I AM very sorry that any thing you have heard I have said should give you uneasiness.

I am obliged to you for the letters you have communicated to

me; and still further for your promise to favour me with others occasionally.

All that relates to my dear cousin I shall be glad to see, be it from whom it will.

Fear not, that your communications shall put me upon any measures that otherwise I should not have taken. The wickedness, sir, is of such a nature, as admits not of aggravation.

Yet I do assure you, that I have not made any resolutions that will be a tie upon me.

I have indeed expressed myself with vehemence upon the occasion. Who could forbear to do so? But it is not my way to resolve in matters of moment, till opportunity brings the execution of my purposes within my reach. We shall see by what manner of spirit this young man will be actuated, on his recovery. If he continue to brave and defy a family, which he has so irreparably injured—if—but resolutions depending upon future contingencies are best left to future determination, as I just now hinted.

Meantime, I will own, that I think my cousin's arguments unanswerable. No *good* man but must be influenced by them.—But, alas! sir, who *is* good?

As to your arguments; I hope you will believe me, when I assure you, as I do now, that your opinion, and your reasonings, have, and will always have, great and deserved weight with me; and that I respect you still more than I did, if possible, for your expostulations in support of my cousin's pious injunctions to me. They come from *you*, sir, with the greatest propriety, as her executor and representative; and likewise as you are a man of humanity, and a well-wisher to both parties.

I send you back the copies of the posthumous letters. I see the humanity of your purpose, in the transmission of them to me; and I thank you most heartily for it. I presume, that it is owing to the same laudable consideration, that you kept back the copy of that to the wicked man himself.

I intend to wait upon Miss Howe in person with the diamond ring, and such other of the effects bequeathed to her as are here. I am, SIR,

Your most faithful and obliged servant,

WM. MORDEN.

[Mr. Belford, in his answer to this letter, further enforces the lady's dying injunctions; and rejoices that the colonel has made no vindictive resolutions. He desires the colonel will give him a day's notice of his coming to town, lest otherwise he may be absent at the time—this he does, though he tells him not the reason, with a view to prevent a meeting between him and Mr. Lovelace; who might be in town (as he apprehends) about the same time, in his way to go abroad.]

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Colonel Morden to John Belford, Esq.

DEAR SIR,

Tuesday, Sept. 26.

I CANNOT help congratulating myself, as well as you, that we have already got through, with the family, every article of the will, where *they* have any concern.

You left me a discretional power, in many instances, and in pursuance of it, I have had my dear cousin's personal jewels valued, and will account to you for them, at the highest price, when I come to town, as well as for other matters that you were pleased to entrust to my management.

These jewels I have presented to my cousin Dolly Hervey, in acknowledgment of her love to the dear departed. I have told Miss Howe of this; and she is as well pleased with what I have done, as if she had been the purchaser of them herself. As that young lady has jewels of her own, she could only have wished to purchase these because they were her beloved friend's.—The grandmother's jewels are also valued; and the money will be paid me for you, to be carried to the uses of the will.

Mrs. Norton is preparing, by general consent, to enter upon her office as housekeeper at *the Grove*. But it is my opinion, that she will not be long on this side heaven.

* * * *

Having now seen every thing that relates to the will of my dear cousin brought to a desirable issue, I will set about making my own. I shall follow the dear creature's example, and give my reasons for every article, that there may be no room for after contention.

What but a fear of death, a fear unworthy of a creature who knows that he must one day as surely die as he was born, can hinder any one from making such a disposition?

I hope soon to pay my respects to you in town. Meantime I am, with great respect, dear sir,

Your faithful and affectionate humble servant,
WM. MORDEN.

Lord M. to John Belford, Esq.

M. Hall, Friday, Sept. 29.

DEAR SIR,

MY nephew Lovelace is now setting out for London; proposing to see you, and then to go to Dover, and so embark. God send him well out of the kingdom.

On Monday he will be with you, I believe. Pray let me be favoured with an account of all your conversations; for Mr. Mow

bray and Mr. Tourville are to be there too; and whether you think he is grown quite his own man again. What I mostly write for is, to wish you to keep Colonel Morden and him asunder; and so I give you notice of his going to town. I should be very loth there should be any mischief between them, as you gave me notice that the colonel threatened my nephew. But my nephew would not bear that; so nobody let him know that he did. But I hope there is no fear: for the colonel does not, as I hear, threaten now. For his own sake, I am glad of that; for there is not such a man in the world as my nephew is said to be, at all the weapons—as well he was not; he would not be so daring.

We shall all here miss the wild fellow. To be sure, there is no man better company when he pleases.

Pray, do you never travel thirty or forty miles? I should be glad to see you here at M. Hall. It will be charity, when my nephew is gone: for we suppose you will be his chief correspondent; although he has promised to write to my nieces often. But he is very apt to forget his promises; to us his relations particularly. God preserve us all: amen! prays

Your very humble servant,
M.

Mr. Belford to Lord M

London, Tuesday night, Oct. 3.

MY LORD,

I OBEY your lordship's commands with great pleasure.

Yesterday in the afternoon Mr. Lovelace made me a visit at my lodgings. As I was in expectation of one from Colonel Morden about the same time, I thought proper to carry him to a tavern which neither of us frequented, (on pretence of an half-appointment) ordering notice to be sent me thither, if the colonel came: and Mr. Lovelace sent to Mowbray and Tourville, and Mr. Doleman, of Uxbridge, (who came to town to take leave of him) to let them know where to find us.

Mr. Lovelace is *too well* recovered, I was going to say. I never saw him more gay, lively, and handsome. We had a good deal of bluster about some parts of the trust I have engaged in; and upon freedoms I had treated him with: in which, he would have it, that I had exceeded our agreed-on limits: but on the arrival of our three old companions, and a nephew of Mr. Doleman's, it blew off for the present.

Mr. Doleman and his nephew took leave of us by twelve. Mowbray and Tourville grew very noisy by one; and were carried off by two. Wine never moves Mr. Lovelace, notwithstanding a

vivacity which generally helps on over-gay spirits. As to myself, the little part I had taken in their gaiety, kept me unconcerned.

The clock struck three before I could get him into any serious or attentive way—so natural to him is gaiety of heart ; and such strong hold had the liveliness of the evening taken of him. His conversation, you know, my lord, when his heart is free, runs off to the bottom without any dregs.

But after that hour, and when we thought of parting, he became a little more serious ; and then he told me his designs, and gave me a plan of his intended tour ; wishing heartily, that I could have accompanied him.

We parted about four ; he not a little dissatisfied with me ; for we had some talk about subjects, which, he said, he loved not to think of ; to wit, Miss Harlowe's will ; my executorship ; papers I had in confidence communicated to that admirable lady (with no unfriendly design, I assure your lordship) ; and he insisting upon, and I refusing, the return of the letters he had written to me, from the time that he had made his first addresses to her.

He would see me once again, he said ; and it would be upon very ill terms if I complied not with his request. Which I bid him not expect. But, that I might not deny him every thing, I told him, that I would give him a copy of the will ; though I was sure, I said, when he read it, he would wish he had never seen it.

I had a message from him about eleven this morning, desiring me to name a place at which to dine with him, and Mowbray, and Tourville, for the last time : and soon after another from Colonel Morden, inviting me to pass the evening with him at the Bedford Head in Covent Garden. And, that I might keep them at distance from one another, I appointed Mr. Lovelace at the Eagle in Suffolk Street.

There I met him, and the two others. We began where we left off at our last parting ; and were very high with each other. But, at last, all was made up, and he offered to forget and to forgive every thing on condition that I would correspond with him while abroad, and continue the series which had been broken through by his illness ; and particularly give him, as I had offered, a copy of the lady's will.

I promised him. and he then fell to rallying me on my gravity, and on my reformation schemes, as he called them. As we walked about the room, expecting dinner to be brought in, he laid his hand upon my shoulder ; then pushed me from him with a curse : walking round me, and surveying me from head to foot ; then calling for the observation of the others, he turned round upon his heel, and with one of his peculiar wild airs, "Ha, ha, ha, ha !" burst he out, "that these sour-faced proselytes should take it into

their heads that they cannot be pious, without forfeiting both their good nature and good manners!—Why, Jack,” turning me about, “pr’ythee look up, man!—Dost thou not know, that religion, if it has taken proper hold of the heart, is the most cheerful *countenance-maker* in the world?—I have heard my beloved Miss Harlowe say so: and she knew, or nobody did. And was not *her* aspect a benign proof of the observation? But by these wamblings in thy cursed gizzard, and thy awkward grimaces, I see thou art but a novice in it yet!—Ah, Belford, Belford, thou hast a confounded parcel of briars and thorns to trample over bare-foot, before religion will illumine these gloomy features!”

I give your lordship this account, in answer to your desire to know, if I think him the man he was.

In our conversation at dinner, he was balancing whether he should set out the next morning, or the morning after. But finding he had nothing to do, and Col. Morden being in town, (which, however, I told him not of,) I turned the scale; and he agreed upon setting out to-morrow morning; they to see him embark; and I promised to accompany them for a morning’s ride (as they proposed their horses); but said, that I must return in the afternoon.

With much reluctance they let me go to my evening’s appointment: they little thought with whom: for Mr. Lovelace had put it as a case of honour to all of us, whether, as he had been told that Mr. Morden and Mr. James Harlowe had thrown out menaces against him, he ought to leave the kingdom till he had thrown himself in their way.

Mowbray gave his opinion, that he ought to leave it like a man of honour as he was; and if he did not take those gentlemen to task for their opprobrious speeches, that at least he should be seen by them in public before he went away; else they might give themselves airs, as if he had left the kingdom in fear of them.

To this he himself so much inclined, that it was with difficulty I persuaded him, that as they had neither of them proceeded to a *direct* and *formal challenge*; as they knew he had not made himself difficult of access; and as he had already done the family injury enough; and it was Miss Harlowe’s earnest desire, that he would be content with that; he had no reason from any point of honour, to delay his journey; especially as he had so just a motive for his going, as the establishing of his health; and as he might return the sooner, if he saw occasion for it.

I found the colonel in a very solemn way. We had a good deal of discourse upon the subject of certain letters which had passed between us in relation to Miss Harlowe’s will, and to her family. He has some accounts to settle with his banker; which, he says, will be adjusted to-morrow; and on Thursday he proposes to go

down again, to take leave of his friends; and then intends to set out directly for Italy.

I wish Mr. Lovelace could have been prevailed upon to take any other tour, than that of France and Italy. I did propose Madrid to him; but he laughed at me, and told me, that the proposal was in character from a *mule*; and from one who was become as grave as a Spaniard of the *old cut*, at *ninety*.

I expressed to the colonel my apprehensions, that his cousin's dying injunctions would not have the force upon him that were to be wished.

"They have *great force* upon me, Mr. Belford," said he; "or *one world* would not have held Mr. Lovelace and me thus long. But my intention is to go to Florence; not to lay my bones there, as upon my cousin's death I told you I thought to do; but to settle all my affairs in those parts, and then to come over and reside upon a little paternal estate in Kent, which is strangely gone to ruin in my absence. Indeed, were I to meet Mr. Lovelace, either here or abroad, I might not be answerable for the consequence."

He would have engaged me for to-morrow. But having promised to attend Mr. Lovelace on his journey, as I have mentioned, I said, I was obliged to go out of town, and was uncertain as to the time of my return in the evening. And so I am to see him on Thursday morning at my own lodgings.

I will do myself the honour to write again to your lordship to-morrow night. Meantime,

I am, my lord, your lordship's, etc.

Mr. Belford to Lord M.

MY LORD,

Wedn. night, Oct. 4.

I AM just returned from attending Mr. Lovelace as far as Gad's Hill, near Rochester. He was exceedingly gay all the way. Mowbray and Tourville are gone on with him. They will see him embark, and under sail; and promise to follow him in a month or two, for they say there is no living without him, now he is once more himself.

He and I parted with great and even solemn tokens of affection; but yet not without gay intermixtures, as I will acquaint your lordship.

Taking me aside, and clasping his arms about me, "Adieu, dear Belford!" said he; "may you proceed in the course you have entered upon!—Whatever airs I give myself, this charming creature has fast hold of me *here*—[clapping his hand upon his heart:] and I must either appear what you see me, or be what I so lately was—O the divine creature!" lifting up his eyes—

"But if I live to come to England, and you remain fixed in your present way, and can give me encouragement, I hope rather to follow your *example*, than to ridicule you for it. This will [for I had given him a copy of it] I will make the companion of my solitary hours. You have told me part of its melancholy contents: and that, and her posthumous letter, shall be my study: and they will prepare me for being your disciple, if you hold on.

"*You, Jack, may marry,*" continued he; "and I have a wife in my eye for you."—

"As for *me*, I never *will*, I never *can*, marry—that I will not take a few liberties, and that I will not try to start some of my former game, I won't promise—habits are not easily shaken off—but they shall be by way of weaning. So *return* and *reform* shall go together.

"And now, thou sorrowful monkey, what aileth thee?"—I do love him, my lord.

"Adieu,—and once more adieu!"—embracing me. "And when thou thinkest thou hast made thyself an interest *out yonder* (looking up) then put in a word for thy Lovelace!"

Joining company, he recommended to me to write often: and promised to let me quickly hear from him; and that he would write to your lordship, and to all his family round; for he said, you had all been more kind to him than he deserved.

And so we parted.

I hope, my lord, for all your noble family's sake, that we shall see him soon return, and reform, as he promises.

I am, my lord,

Your most faithful and obedient servant,

J. BELFORD.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

Paris, Oct. 14.

I OUGHT to have written to you sooner. But I loitered two days at Calais, for an answer to a letter I wrote to engage my former travelling valet, De la Tour; an ingenious, ready fellow, as you have heard me say. I have engaged him, and he is now with me.

I shall make no stay here; but intend for some of the electoral courts. That of Bavaria, I think, will engage me longest. Perhaps I may step out of my way (if I can be out of my way any where) to those of Dresden and Berlin: and it is not impossible that you may have one letter from me at Vienna. And then perhaps I may fall down into Italy by the Tyrol; and so, taking Turin in my way,

return to Paris ; where I hope to see Mowbray and Tourville ; nor do I despair of you.

This a good deal differs from the plan I gave you, But you may expect to hear from me as I move ; and whether I shall pursue this route or the other.

I have my former lodgings in the Rue St. Antoine : which I shall hold, notwithstanding my tour : so they will be ready to accommodate any two of you, if you come hither before my return and for this I have conditioned.

I write to Charlotte ; and that is writing to all my relations at once.

Do thou, Jack, inform me duly of every thing that passes.—Particularly, how thou proceedest in thy reformation-scheme : how Mowbray and Tourville go on in my absence : whether thou hast any chance for a wife [I am the more solicitous on this head, because thou seemest to think, that thy mortification will not be complete, nor thy reformation secure, till thou art shackled] : how the Harlowes proceed in their penitentials : if Miss Howe be married, or near being so : how honest Doleman goes on with his empiric, now he has dismissed his regulars, or they him ; and if any likelihood of his perfect recovery. Be sure be very minute : for every trifling occurrence relating to those we value, becomes interesting, when we are at a distance from them. Finally, prepare thou to piece thy broken thread, if thou wouldst oblige thy

LOVELACE.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

Paris, Oct. 16—27.

I FOLLOW my last of the 14-25th on occasion of a letter just now come to hand from Joseph Leman. The fellow is conscience-ridden, Jack ; and tells me, “ that he cannot rest either day or night for the mischiefs which he fears he has been, and may still further be, the means of doing.” He wishes, “ if it please God, and if it please *me*, that he had never seen my honour’s face.”

And what is the cause of his present concern, as to his own particular ? What, but “ the *slights* and *contempts* which he receives from every one of the Harlowes ; from those particularly, he says, whom he has endeavoured to serve as faithfully, as his engagements to *me* would let him serve them ! And I always made him believe, he tells me, (*poor weak soul as he was from his cradle !*, that serving me, was serving both, *in the long-run*. But this, and the death of his dear young lady, is a grief, he declares, that he shall never *claw off*, were he to live to the age of *Matthew-Salem* : *althof*, and *howsomever*, he is sure, that he shall not live a *month*

to an end: being strangely pined, and his *stomach* nothing like what it was: and Mrs. Betty being also (now she *has got his love*, very *cross and slighting*: but, thank his God for punishing her! she is in a poor way *herself*.

"But the chief occasion of troubling my honour now, is not his own griefs only, *althof* they are very great; but to prevent further mischiefs to me: for he can assure me, that Colonel Morden has set out from them all with a full resolution to *have his will of me*: and he is well assured, that he said, and swore to it, *as how* he was resolved that he would either have my honour's heart's-blood, or I should have his; or *some such-like sad threatenings*: and that all the family rejoice in it, and hope I shall *come short home*."

This is the substance of Joseph's letter, and I have one from Mowbray, which has a hint to the same effect. And I recollect now, that you were very importunate with me to go to Madrid, rather than to France and Italy, the last evening we passed together.

What I desire of you, is, by the first dispatch, to let me faithfully know all that you know on this head.

I can't bear to be threatened, Jack. Nor shall any man, unquestioned, give himself airs in my absence, if I know it, that shall make me look mean in any body's eyes: that shall give my friends *pain* for me: that shall put them upon wishing me to change my intentions, or my plan, to avoid him. Upon such despicable terms as these, think you that I could bear to live?

But why, if such were his purpose, did he not let me know it before I left England? Was he unable to work himself up to a resolution, till he knew me to be out of the kingdom?

As soon as I can inform myself where to direct to him, I will write to know his purpose: for I cannot bear suspense in such a case as this: that solemn act, were it even to be marriage or hanging, which must be done to-morrow, I had rather should be done to-day. My mind tires and sickens with impatience on ruminating upon scenes that can neither afford variety nor certainty. To dwell twenty days in expectation of an event that may be decided in a quarter of an hour, is grievous.

If he come to Paris, although I should be on my tour, he will very easily find out my *lodgings*; for I every day see some or other of my countrymen, and divers of them have I entertained *here*. I go frequently to the opera and to the play, and appear at court, and at all public places. And, on my quitting this city, will leave a direction whither my letters from England, or elsewhere, shall from time to time be forwarded.

Were I sure, that his intention is what Joseph Leman tells me

It is, I would stay here, or shorten his course to me, let him be where he would.

I cannot get off my regrets on account of this dear lady for the blood of me. If the colonel and I are to meet, as he has done me no injury, and loves the memory of his cousin, we shall engage with the same sentiments, as to the object of our dispute; and that, you know, is no very common case.

In short, I am as much convinced that I have done wrong, as he can be; and regret it as much. But I will not bear to be threatened by any man in the world, however conscious I may be of having deserved blame.

Adieu, Belford! Be sincere with me. No palliation, as thou valuest thy

LOVELACE.

Mr. Belford to Robert Lovelace, Esq.

London, Oct. 26.

I CANNOT think, my dear Lovelace, that Colonel Morden has either threatened you in those gross terms mentioned by the vile, hypocritical, and ignorant Joseph Leman, or intends to follow you. They are the words of people of that fellow's class; and not of a gentleman: not of Colonel Morden, I am sure. You'll observe, that Joseph pretends not to say that he heard him speak them.

I have been very solicitous to sound the colonel, for your sake, and for his own, and for the sake of the injunctions of the excellent lady to me, as well as to him, on that subject. He is (and you will not wonder that he should be) extremely affected; and owns that he has expressed himself in terms of resentment on the occasion. Once he said to me, that had his beloved cousin's case been that of a *common seduction*, her own credulity or weakness contributing to her fall; he could have forgiven you. But, in so many words, he assured me, that he had not taken any resolutions; nor had he declared himself to the family in such a way as should bind him to resent: on the contrary, he has owned, that his cousin's injunctions have hitherto had the force upon him which I could wish they should have.

He went abroad in a week after you. When he took his leave of me, he told me, that his design was to go to Florence; and that he would settle his affairs there; and then return to England, and here pass the remainder of his days.

I was indeed apprehensive, that if you and he were to meet, something unhappy might fall out: and as I knew that you proposed to take Italy, and very likely Florence, in your return to France, I was very solicitous to prevail upon you to take the court

of Spain into your plan. I am still so. And if you are not to be prevailed upon to do that, let me intreat you to avoid Florence or Leghorn in your return, since you have visited both heretofore. At least, let not the proposal of a meeting come from you.

Let *me* (and through me all your friends) have the satisfaction to hear, that you are resolved to avoid this gentleman. Time will subdue all things. Nobody doubts your bravery. Nor will it be known, that your plan is changed through persuasion.

Young Harlowe talks of calling you to account. This is a plain evidence, that Mr. Morden has not taken the quarrel upon himself for their family.

I am in no apprehension of any body but Colonel Morden. I know it will not be a means to prevail upon you to oblige me, if I say, that I am well assured, that this gentleman is a skilful swordsman; and that he is as cool and sedate as skilful. But yet I will add, that if I had a value for my life, he should be the last man, except yourself, with whom I would choose to have a contention.

I have, as you required, been very candid and sincere with you. I have not aimed at palliation. If you seek not Colonel Morden, it is my opinion he will not seek you: for he is a man of principle. But if you seek him, I believe he will not shun you.

Let me re-urge, [it is the effect of my love for you!] that you know your own guilt in this affair, and should not be again an aggressor. It would be a pity, that so brave a man as the colonel should drop, were you and he to meet: and, on the other hand, it would be dreadful, that you should be sent to your account unprepared for it, and pursuing a fresh violence. Moreover, seest thou not, in the deaths of two of thy principal agents, *the hand-writing upon the wall against thee*.

My zeal on this occasion may make me guilty of repetition. Indeed I know not how to quit the subject. But if what I have written, added to your own remorse and consciousness, cannot prevail, all that I might further urge would be ineffectual.

Adieu, therefore! Mayst thou repent of the past! and may no new violences add to thy heavy reflections, and overwhelm thy future hopes! are the wishes of Thy true friend,

JOHN BELFORD.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

Munich, Nov. 11—22.

I RECEIVED yours this moment, just as I was setting out for Vienna.

As to going to Madrid, or one single step out of the way to avoid Colonel Morden, let me perish if I do!—You cannot think me so mean a wretch.

And so you own, that he has threatened me, but not in gross and ungentlemanly terms, you say. If he has threatened me like a gentleman, I will resent his threats like a gentleman. But he has not done as a man of honour, if he has threatened at all behind my back. I would scorn to threaten any man to whom I *knew* how to address myself, either personally, or by pen and ink.

As to what you mention of my guilt; of the hand-writing on the wall; of a legal prosecution, if he meet his fate from my hand; of his skill, coolness, courage, and such-like poltroon stuff; what can you mean by it? Surely you cannot believe, that such insinuations as those will weaken either my hands or my heart.—No more of this sort of nonsense, I beseech you, in any of your future letters.

He had not taken any resolutions, you say, when you saw him. He *must* and *will* take resolutions, one way or other, very quickly; for I wrote to him yesterday without waiting for this your answer to my last. I could not avoid it. I could not (as I told you in that) live in suspense. I have directed my letter to Florence. Nor could I suffer my friends to live in suspense as to my safety. But I have couched it in such moderate terms, that he has fairly his option. He will be the challenger, if he take it in the sense in which he may so handsomely avoid taking it. And if he does, it will demonstrate, that malice and revenge were the predominant passions with him; and that he was determined but to settle his affairs, and then *take his resolutions*, as you phrase it.—Yet, if we are to meet, [for I know what *my* option would be, in *his* case, on *such a letter*, complaisant as it is] I wish *he* had a worse, *I* a better cause. It would be a sweet revenge to him, were I to fall by his hand. But what should I be the better for killing him?

I will inclose the copy of the letter I sent him.

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Mr. Lovelace to William Morden, Esq.

[Inclosed in the above.]

SIR,

Munich, Nov. 10—21.

I HAVE heard with a great deal of surprise, that you have thought fit to throw out some menacing expressions against me.

I should have been very glad, that you had thought I had punishment enough in my own mind, for the wrongs I have done to the most excellent of women; and that it had been possible for two persons so ardently joining in one love (especially as I was desirous, to the utmost of my power, to repair those wrongs) to have lived, if not on amicable terms, in such a way, as not to put either to the pain of hearing of threatenings thrown out in absence.

which either ought to be depised for, if he had not spirit to take notice of them.

Now, sir, if what I have heard be owing only to warmth of temper or to sudden passion, while the loss of all other losses, the most deplorable to me, was recent, I not only excuse, but commend you for it. But if you are really *determined* to meet me on any other account, [which, I own to you, is not however what I wish] it would be very blameable, and very unworthy of the character I desire to maintain, as well with you as with every other gentleman, to give you a difficulty in doing it.

Being uncertain when this letter may meet you, I shall set out to-morrow for Vienna; where any letter directed to the post-house in that city, or to Baron Windisgrat's, (at the Favourita) to whom I have commendations, will come to hand.

Meantime, believing you to be a man too generous to make a wrong construction of what I am going to declare, and knowing the value which the dearest of all creatures had for you, and your relation to her, I will not scruple to assure you, that the most acceptable return will be, that Colonel Morden chooses to be upon an amicable, rather than upon any other footing, with

His sincere admirer, and humble servant,

R. LOVELACE.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

Lintz, { *Nov. 28.*
Dec. 9.

I AM now on way to Trent, in order to meet Colonel Morden, in pursuance of his answer to my letter inclosed in my last. I had been at Presburg, and had intended to visit some other cities of Hungary: but having obliged myself to return first to Vienna, I there met with his letter: which follows.

Munich, { *Nov. 21.*
Dec. 2.

SIR,

YOUR letter was at Florence four days before I arrived there.

That I might not appear unworthy of your favour, I set out for this city the very next morning. I knew not but that the politeness of this court might have engaged, beyond his intention, a gentleman who has only his pleasure to pursue.

But being disappointed in my hope of finding you here, it becomes me to acquaint you, that I have such a desire to stand well in the opinion of a man of your spirit, that I cannot hesitate a moment upon the option, which I am sure Mr. Lovelace, in my situation, (thus called upon) would make.

I own, sir, that I have, on all occasions, spoken of your treatment of my ever-dear cousin as it deserved. It would have been very surprising if I had not. And it behoves me (now you have given me so noble an opportunity of explaining myself) to convince you, that no words fell from my lips, of you, merely because you were absent. I acquaint you, therefore, that I will attend your appointment; and would, were it to the farthest part of the globe.

I shall stay some days at this court; and if you please to direct for me at M. Klienfurt's in this city, whether I remain here or not, your commands will come safely and speedily to the hands of, sir,

Your most humble servant,

WM. MORDEN.

So you see, Belford, that the colonel, by his ready, his even eagerly expressed, acceptance of the offered interview, *was determined*. And is it not much better to bring such a point as this to an issue, than to give pain to friends for my safety, or continue in suspense myself; as I must do, if I imagined that another had aught against me? This was my reply:

Vienna, { Nov. 25.
 { Dec. 6.

SIR,

I HAVE this moment the favour of yours. I will suspend a tour I was going to take into Hungary, and instantly set out for Munich; and, if I find you not there, will proceed to Trent. This city, being on the confines of Italy, will be most convenient, as I presume, to you, in your return to Tuscany; and I shall hope to meet you in it on 3-14th of December.

I shall bring with me only a French valet and an English footman. Other particulars may be adjusted when I have the honour to see you. Till when,

I am, sir, your most obedient servant,

R. LOVELACE.

Now, Jack, I have no manner of apprehension of the event of this meeting. And I think I may say, he seeks me; not I him. And so let him take the consequence.

What is infinitely nearer to my heart is, my ingratitude to the most excellent of women—my *premeditated* ingratitude!—Yet all the while enabled to distinguish and adore her excellencies, in spite of the mean opinion of the sex which I had imbibed from early manhood.

But this lady has asserted the worthiness of her sex, and most gloriously has she exalted it with me now. Yet surely, as I have said and written an hundred times, there cannot be such another WOMAN.

But as my loss in her departure is the greatest of any man's and as she was nearer to me than to any other person in the world, and once she herself *wished to be so*, what an insolence in any man breathing to pretend to avenge her on *me*!—Happy! happy! thrice happy! had I known how to value, as I ought to have valued, the glory of such a preference!

I will aggravate to myself this aggravation of the colonel's pretending to call me to account for my treatment of a lady so much *my own*, lest, in the approaching interview, my heart should relent for one so nearly related to her, and who means honour and justice to her memory; and I should thereby give him advantages which otherwise he can not have. For I know that I shall be inclined to trust to my skill, to save a man who was so much and so justly valued by her; and shall be loth to give way to my resentment, as a threatened man. And in this respect only I am sorry for his skill, and his courage, lest I should be obliged, in my own defence, to add a chalk to a score that is already too long.

* * * *

If I find myself thus miserable abroad, I will soon return to England, and follow your example, I think—turn hermit, or some plaguy thing or other, and see what a constant course of penitence and mortification will do for me. There is no living at this rate, d—n me if there be!

If any mishap should befall me, you'll have the particulars of it from De la Tour. He indeed knows but little of English: but every modern tongue is yours. He is a trusty and ingenious fellow: and, if any thing happen, will have some other papers, which I shall have ready sealed up, for you to transmit to Lord M. And since thou art so expert and so ready at executorships, pr'ythee, Belford, accept of the office for me, as well as for my Clarissa—CLARISSA LOVELACE let me call her.

By all that's good, I am bewitched to her memory. Her very name with mine joined to it, ravishes my soul, and is more delightful to me than the sweetest music.

Had I carried her [I must still recriminate] to any other place than that accursed woman's—for the potion was her invention and mixture; and all the persisted-in violence was at her instigation, and at that of her wretched daughters, *who have now amply revenged upon me their own ruin, which they lay at my door*—

But this looks so like the confession of a thief at the gallows, that possibly thou wilt be apt to think I am intimidated in prospect of the approaching interview. But far otherwise. On the contrary, most cheerfully do I go to meet the colonel; and I would tear my heart out of my breast with my own hands, were it capable of fear or concern on that account.

Doubt not, Jack, that I shall give a good account of this affair. Meantime, I remain,

Yours most affectionately, &c.

LOVELACE.

Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

Trent, Dec. 3-14.

TO-MORROW is to be the day that will, in all probability, send either one or two ghosts to attend the manes of my CLARISSA.

I arrived here yesterday; and inquiring for an English gentleman of the name of Morden, soon found out the colonel's lodgings. He had been in town two days; and left his name at every probable place.

He was gone to ride out; and I left *my* name, and where to be found: and in the evening he made me a visit.

He was plaguy gloomy. That was not I. But yet he told me, that I had acted like a man of true spirit in my first letter; and with honour, in giving him so readily this meeting. He wished I had in other respects; and then we might have seen each other upon better terms than now we did.

I said, there was no recalling what was passed; and that I wished some things had not been done, as well as he.

To recriminate now, he said, would be as exasperating as unavailable. And as I had so cheerfully given him this opportunity, words should give place to business.—*Your* choice, Mr. Lovelace, of time, of place, of weapon, shall be *my* choice.

The two latter be yours, Mr. Morden. The time to-morrow, or next day, as you please.

Next day, then, Mr. Lovelace: and we'll ride out to-morrow, to fix the place.

Agreed, sir.

Well; now, Mr Lovelace, do you choose the weapon.

I said, I believed we might be upon equal foot with the single rapier; but, if he thought otherwise, I had no objection to a pistol.

I will only say, replied he, that the chances may be more equal by the sword, because we can neither of us be to seek in that: and you would stand a worse chance, as I apprehend, with a pistol: and yet I have brought two, that you may take your choice of either: for, added he, I never missed a mark at pistol-distance, since I knew how to hold a pistol.

I told him, that he spoke like himself: that I was expert enough that way, to embrace it, if he chose it; though not so sure of my mark as he pretended to be. Yet the devil's in't, colonel, if I, who have slit a bullet in two upon a knife's edge, hit not my man.

So I have no objection to a pistol, if it be *your* choice. No man, I'll venture to say, has a steadier hand or eye than I have.

They may both be of use to you, sir, at the sword, as well as at the pistol: the sword therefore be the thing, if you please.

With all my heart.

We parted with a solemn sort of ceremonious civility: and this day I called upon him; and we rode out together to fix upon the place: and both being of one mind, and hating to put off for the morrow what could be done to-day, would have decided it then: but De la Tour, and the colonel's valet, who attended us, being unavoidably let into the secret, joined to beg we would have with us a surgeon from Brixen, whom La Tour had fallen in with there, and who had told him he was to ride next morning to bleed a person in a fever, at a lone cottage, which by the surgeon's description was not far from the place where we then were, if it were not that very cottage within sight of us.

They undertook so to manage it, that the surgeon should know nothing of the matter till his assistance was called in. And La Tour being, as I assured the colonel, a ready contriving fellow, [whom I ordered to obey him as myself, were the chance to be in *his* favour] we both agreed to defer the decision till to-morrow, and to leave the whole about the surgeon to the management of our two valets; enjoining them absolute secrecy: and so rode back again by different ways.

We fixed upon a little lone valley for the spot—ten to-morrow morning the time—and single rapier the word. Yet I repeatedly told him, that I valued myself so much upon my skill in that weapon, that I could wish him to choose any other.

He said, it was a gentleman's weapon; and he who understood it not, wanted a qualification that he ought to suffer for not having: but that, as to him, one weapon was as good as another, throughout all the instruments of offence.

So, Jack, you see I take no advantage of him: but my devil must deceive me, if he take not his life or his death at my hands before eleven to-morrow morning.

His valet and mine are to be present; but both strictly enjoined to be impartial and inactive: and, in return for my civility of the like nature, he commanded *his* to be assisting to me if he fell.

We are to ride thither, and to dismount when at the place; and his footman and mine are to wait at an appointed distance, with a chaise to carry off to the borders of the Venetian territories the survivor, if one drop; or to assist either or both, as occasion may demand. And thus, Belford, is the matter settled.

Yours, &c.

LOVELACE

TRANSLATION OF A LETTER FROM J. F. DE LA TOUR.

To John Belford, Esq., near Soho-Square, London.

SIR,

Trent, Dec. 18, N. S.

I HAVE melancholy news to inform you of, by order of the Chevalier Lovelace. He shewed me his letter to you before he sealed it; signifying, that he was to meet the Chevalier Morden on the 15th. Wherefore, as the occasion of the meeting is so well known to you, I shall say nothing of it here.

I had taken care to have ready, within a little distance, a surgeon and his assistant, to whom, under an oath of secrecy, I had revealed the matter (though I did not own it to the two gentlemen); so that they were prepared with bandages, and all things proper. For well was I acquainted with the bravery and skill of my chevalier; and had heard the character of the other; and knew the animosity of both. A post-chaise was ready, with each of their footman, at a little distance.

The two chevaliers came exactly at their time: they were attended by Monsieur Margate (the colonel's gentleman) and myself. They had given orders over night, and now repeated them in each other's presence, that we should observe a strict impartiality between them: and that if one fell, each of us should look upon himself, as to any needful help or retreat, as the servant of the survivor, and take his commands accordingly.

After a few compliments, both the gentlemen, with the greatest presence of mind that I ever beheld in men, stript to their shirts, and drew.

They parried with equal judgment several passes. My chevalier drew the first blood, making a desperate push, which by a sudden turn of his antagonist, missed going clear through him, and wounded him on the fleshy part of the ribs of his right side; which part the sword tore out, being on the extremity of the body: but, before my chevalier could recover himself, the colonel, in return, pushed him into the inside of the left arm, near the shoulder: and the sword (raking his breast as it passed) being followed by a great effusion of blood, the colonel said, Sir, I believe you have enough.

My chevalier swore by G—d, he was not hurt: 'twas a pin's point: and so made another pass at his antagonist; which he, with a surprising dexterity, received under his arm, and run my dear chevalier into the body: who immediately fell; saying, The luck is yours, sir—O my beloved Clarissa!—Now art thou—inwardly he spoke three or four words more. His sword dropt from his hand. Mr. Morden threw his down, and ran to him, saying in

French—Ah, monsieur ! you are a dead man !—Call to God for mercy !

We gave the signal agreed upon to the footmen ; and they to the surgeons ; who instantly came up.

Colonel Morden, I found, was too well used to the bloody work ; for he was as cool as if nothing extraordinary had happened, assisting the surgeons though his own wound bled much. But my dear chevalier fainted away two or three times running, and vomited blood besides.

However, they stopped the bleeding for the present ; and we helped him into the voiture : and then the colonel suffered his own wound to be dressed ; and appeared concerned that my chevalier was between whiles (when he could speak, and struggle) extremely outrageous.—Poor gentleman ! he had made quite sure of victory !

The colonel, against the surgeons' advice, would mount on horseback to pass into the Venetian territories ; and generously gave me a purse of gold to pay the surgeons ; desiring me to make a present to the footman ; and to accept of the remainder, as a mark of his satisfaction in my conduct, and in my care and tenderness of my master.

The surgeons told him, that my chevalier could not live over the day.

When the colonel took leave of him, Mr. Lovelace said, You have well revenged the dear creature.

I have, sir, said Mr. Morden ; and perhaps shall be sorry that you called upon me to this work, while I was balancing whether to obey, or disobey, the dear angel.

There is a fate in it ! replied my chevalier—a cursed fate !—Or this could not have been !—But be ye all witnesses, that I have provoked my destiny, and acknowledge that I fall by a man of honour.

Sir, said the colonel, with the piety of a confessor, (wringing Mr. Lovelace's hand) snatch these few fleeting moments, and commend yourself to God.

And so he rode off.

The voiture proceeded slowly with my chevalier ; yet the motion set both his wounds bleeding afresh ; and it was with difficulty they again stopped the blood.

We brought him alive to the nearest cottage ; and he gave orders to me to dispatch to you the packet I herewith send sealed up ; and bid me write to you the particulars of this most unhappy affair ; and give you thanks, in his name, for all your favours and friendship to him.

Contrary to all expectation he lived over the night : but *suffered much*, as well from his *impatience* and *disappointment*, as from his *wounds* ; for he seemed *very unwilling to die*.

He was delirious, at times, in the two last hours ; and then several times cried out, as if he had seen some frightful spectre, 'Take her away ! Take her away ! but named nobody. And sometimes praised some lady, (that Clarissa, I suppose, whom he had invoked when he received his death's wound) calling her, Sweet excellence ! Divine creature ! Fair sufferer !—And once he said, Look down, blessed spirit, look down ;—and there he stopt ;—his lips, however, moving.

At nine in the morning, he was seized with convulsions, and fainted away ; and it was a quarter of an hour before he came out of them.

His few last words I must not omit, as they shew an ultimate composure ; which may administer some consolation to his honourable friends.

Blessed—said he, addressing himself no doubt to heaven ; for his dying eyes were lifted up—a strong convulsion prevented him for a few moments saying more—but recovering, he again, with great fervor, (lifting up his eyes, and his spread hands) pronounced the word *blessed* ! Then in a seeming ejaculation, he spoke inwardly so as not to be understood : at last he distinctly pronounced these three words,

LET THIS EXPIATE !

And then, his head sinking on his pillow, he expired, at about half an hour after ten.

He little thought, poor gentleman ! his end so near : so had given no direction about his body. I have caused it to be embowelled, and deposited in a vault, till I have orders from England.

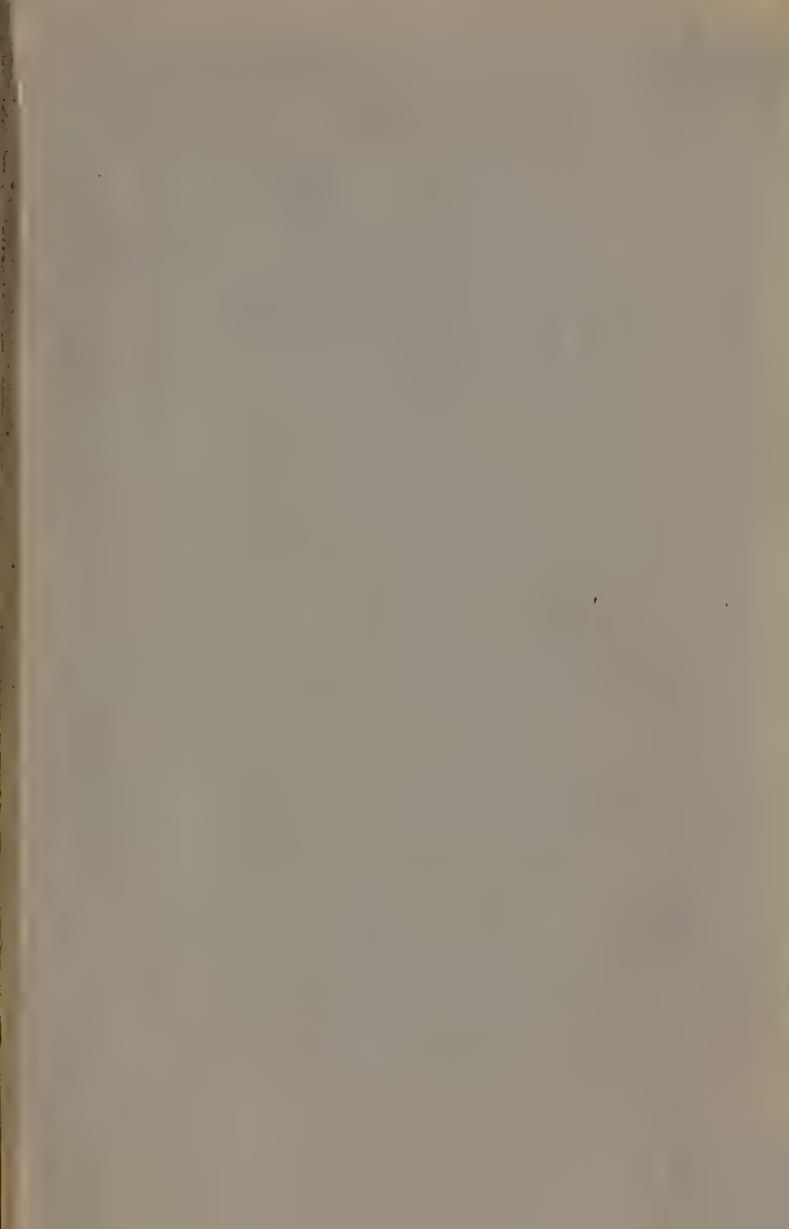
This was a favour that was procured with difficulty ; and would have been refused, had he not been an Englishman of rank : a nation with reason respected in every Austrian government—for he had refused ghostly attendance, and the sacraments in the catholic way. May his soul be happy, I pray God !

Your most faithful and obedient servant,

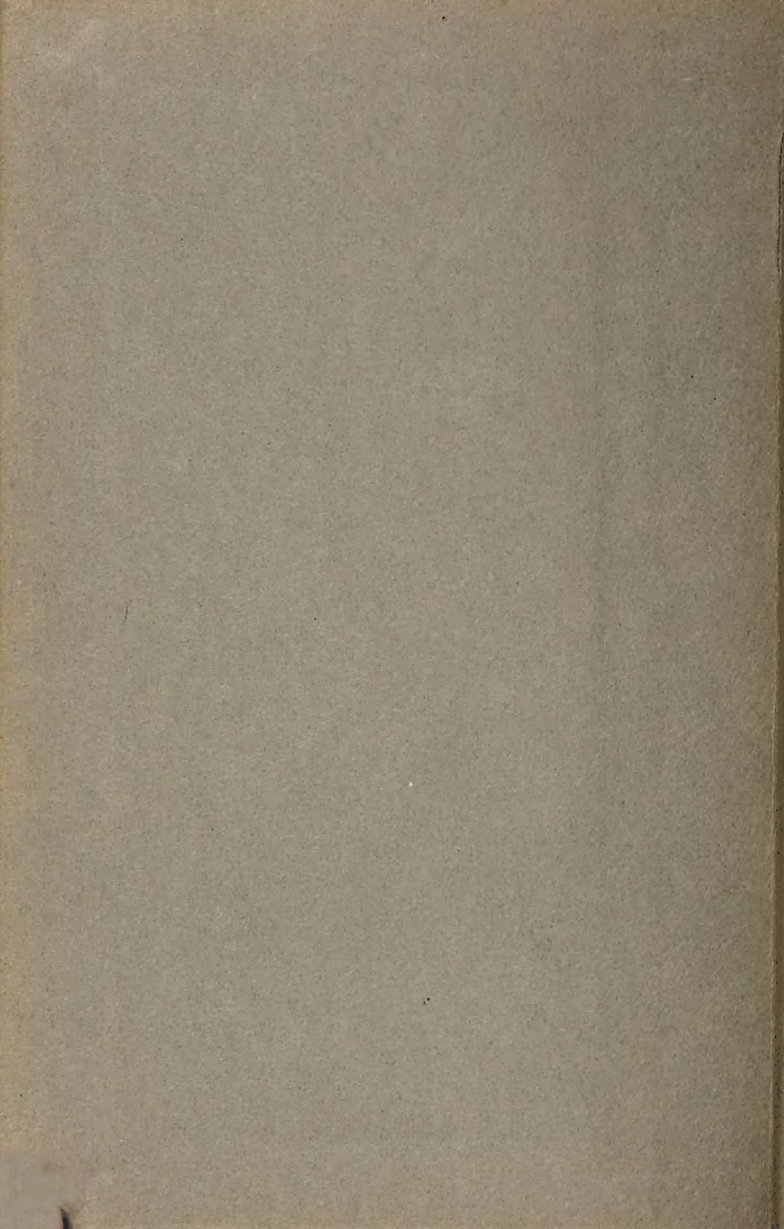
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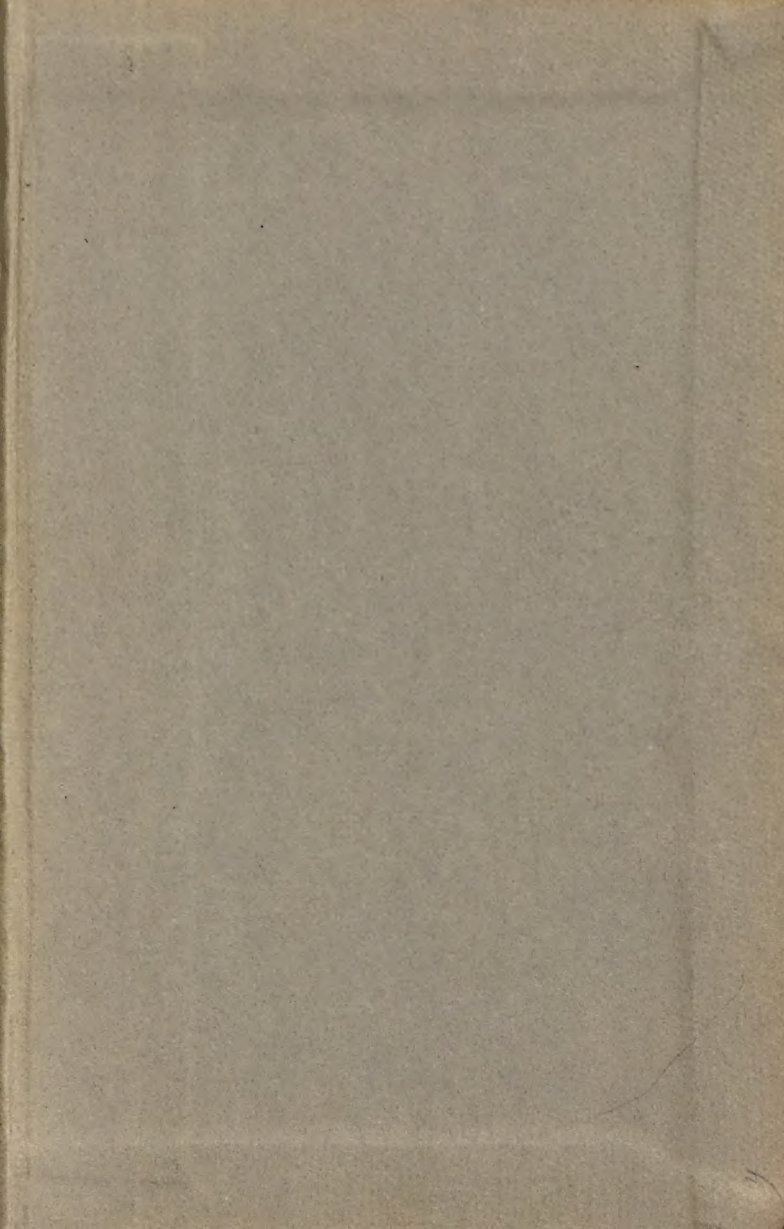
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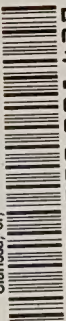




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